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The best of 1993

Sega Force Special

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Sega may be known as kings of the console world but there's a lot more to the company than that. Just check out what Sonic and his pals have been up to in 1993.

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Back in September there was one day that stood out from the rest: Monday 13th — Mortal Monday. On this day *Mortal Kombat* shipped over 500,000 units worldwide!

51 **May the force be with you.**
All the best releases of 1993 on the Sega Master System and Game Gear can be found in the centre of this special issue — in Sega Master Force.

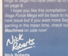
124 **Your essential guide**
You'll never have to worry about spending your hard earned cash on a game again — just check it out in this special Mega Drive and Mega-CD guide first.

Hello to one and all and welcome to the definitive guide to Sega in 1993. I've compiled the top reviews from ***Sega Force Mega*** and ***Sega Master Force*** into a handy magazine full of reviews on the top software for all Segas.

There have been some cracking games over the last few months — games that will go on to become classics. What about *Mortal Kombat* eh? It's looks excellent on all formats and it shipped 500,000 units in the very first day!

As well as reviews I also stumbled upon snippets of news on your favourite console giant. Check out what the hedgehogs at Sega HQ have been up to recently on page 6.

I hope you like this compilation — *Sega Force Mega* will be back to normal next issue but if you want more Sega gaming in the mean time, check out ***Mega Machines*** on sale now!



Nick Roberts
Compilation Editor



Sega Snippets

1993 has been a busy year for Sega. It's seen the launch of the Mega-CD and Sonic the Hedgehog merchandising has really taken off. They've even opened up their own arcade centres around the country! Just take a look at some of the Sega Snippets we've managed to dig up...

The write stuff!

Are you stuck for something to give as a prezzy this Christmas? Or do you wish for **Sonic** stocking-fillers from Santa? If so, we've the answer: there's all kinds of Sonic merchandising around the shops and it's all dead cool!

We went shopping and came across lots of interesting items. Pencils, rubbers, rulers, note books, folders — whatever's missing from your school bag, you can get with 'Sonic — The Hedgehog with Attitude!' plastered all over it. You'll be the trendiest in your class if you've got hedgehog gear to show off. All this Sonic stuff is available from the usual high street stores and prices start at around 70p!



Sonic hits the arcades!

The hottest news for **Sega** owners this year has been that **Sonic the Hedgehog** is set to appear in his first arcade machine. But this isn't just any Sonic game. This all-new adventure features so many hot elements that this coin-op will cause queues to put *Street Fighter II* to shame!





For a start, the storyline isn't based on any Sonic cart but borrows elements from all of the blue spiky one's games. Unlike its predecessors, *Sonic Arcade Adventure*'s viewed from an overhead angle, as you can see in these screenshots. The stunning three-dimensional graphics are some of the best seen in any game and equal those in the excellent *Virtua Racing*.

The other strange thing is that all the character's moves are controlled via a trackball, rather than a joystick. A device first used in ancient games such as *Missile Command* and Centipede, the trackball provides the player with superb control as Sonic blasts through long and numerous levels.

As well as the trackball, a single button triggers Sonic's spinning jump, useful for destroying enemies and annoying obstacles. With such simple controls, virtually anyone should be able to pick it up.

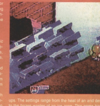
'Ray! Mighty Sonic!

There's no sign of **Tails** in *Sonic Arcade Adventure* but the hedgehog's joined by two animal pals, **Ray** and **Mighty**. With the addition of these characters, up to three players can participate in one game!

Dr Robotnik's pulled out all the stops this time and provides our heroes with more traps and nasty surprises than ever before. Beams of electricity blast from nowhere, huge gears can crush you, robotic foes roam every level and massive chasms must be leapt.

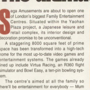
All the characters can perform various feats such as swinging on chains, flying from catapults and leaping onto swinging trapezes. Robotnik himself pops up when you've completed a level, ranting and raving before launching his next assault.

Each massive level features the usual Sonic elements such as hidden items, golden rings and power-ups. The settings range from the heat of an arid desert to the frozen wastes of an ice zone. This game has to be seen to be believed!



Sonic Arcade Adventure should appear in your local arcade at the end of this year so keep your eyes peeled — it's a blast!

The ultimate game centre



Sega Amusements are about to open one of London's biggest Family Entertainment Centres. Situated within the Yaohan Plaza project, a Japanese leisure and retail complex, its interior design and decoration promise to be unconventional.

A staggering 8000 square feet of prime space has been transformed into a high-tech home for the most up-to-date video games and entertainment systems. The games already lined up include Virtua Racing, an R360 flight simulator and Bowl Easy, a ten-pin bowling system.

The centre's aimed at all the family so there'll be entertainment for everybody — Mum and Dad, teenagers and sprogs. In keeping with this attitude, there won't be gambling machines of any kind at Sega centres.

Malcolm Evans, Sega's Director of Operations, commented, 'We are delighted to be associated with the Yaohan Plaza. The Plaza is the first and largest of its kind in Europe and as such we are theming this, our latest operation, towards both a Japanese and local user group.' Sega already have successful operations in Hamleys, EuroDisney, Virgin Megastores, France and Japan, where they lead the field.

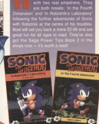
The Yaohan Plaza opens in September and provides a quality blend of Japanese nosh and entertainment to please game-freaks of all ages.



Down at the Sega Centre you can play the latest games and meet Sonic & Tails too!

Become a book worm!

With Christmas firmly in mind, Virgin have once again entered the videogame books market with two real smashers. They are both novels: 'In the Fourth Dimension' and 'In Robotnik's Laboratory' following the further adventures of Sonic with Robotnik at the centre of his troubles. Bost will set you back a mere £2.99 and are great fun for all ages to read. They've also got the Sega Power Tips Book 2 in the shops now — it's worth a read!



Super Sonic Snack!

Benson Crisps have teamed up with Sega to produce the first *Sonic the Hedgehog* crisps in the UK. Benson's are already infamous for creating hedgehog-flavoured crisps, so they were the logical choice for the spikey one's first venture into snackdom! The packs will portray scenes from Sonic's smash-hit Mega Drive carts, while the crisps will be shaped in the image of the Sega videogame idol. The snack will retail for just 15p and comes in three flavours: Cheese, Spicy Tomato and Salt and Vinegar. What about the authentic taste of Hedgehog, guys?

On every pack will be a *Sonic the Hedgehog* competition, with the chance to win Sonic baseball caps, watches and one of 20 Sega Mega Drives. Not bad for 15p. To get your very own spikey, blue snack check for newsagents with the Sonic sticker in the window. Happy munching!



Praise Be to Sega!

Is this your idea of Heaven or Hell? No, you're not seeing things, this *is* **Thora Hird** of Sunday evening TV, sampling the heavenly delights of **Sega**'s brilliant *Virtua Racing*. The saintly personality and TV presenter was showing a group of young choir boys around Sega's *Metropolis* game department in **Hamley**'s toy shop for her new religious chat show.

Apart from racers, we've been wondering what kind of carts light Thora's candle. Nick reckons it's got to be god sims like *Populous* (for obvious reasons), while Tim thinks she's probably into puzzle games. 'After all,' says Tim, 'it's a complete mystery to me how she's stayed looking so young all these years...'





Sonic comic capers

The blue hedgehog and his furry pals can be seen in a great comic here in the UK from ***Fleetway***. You can pick up a copy in all good newsagents.

Alternatively you could seek out a special comic that's come all the way from the USA! *Sonic The Hedgehog* is a monthly comic-book published by ***Archie***. It features the adventures of Sonic and a small band of furry freedom fighters as they battle the might of Doc Robotnik and his mechanical creatures.

This comic's reportedly based on a Sonic cartoon series due to appear on American TV some time in the autumn, but before you rush off to your newsagent, the *Sonic The Hedgehog* comic is only available in specialist comic shops.

Don't panic, Sonic freaks! Word is that it may be officially available in the UK in 1994. Meanwhile, if the original **Archie** edition takes your fancy, give **Forbidden Planet** in London a call on (071) 836 4179.

Bottoms up!



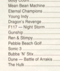
Forget those tacky old adverts starring **Rolf Harris** and his big toe, **Sega** have launched a new campaign to teach water safety to school children and they've roped in the stars of *Baywatch* to help out. As part of a sponsorship deal with the **Royal Life Saving Society**, Sega have helped produce a teaching pack for the 'Lifeguard Potential' project, which includes a 20-minute video starring the *Baywatch* team and **Ecco the Dolphin**. Although 25,000 of these comprehensive packs have been produced for the project, the RLSS have already received orders for over 15,000 from schools all over the country.

Director of the RLSS, **Ceila Godsall**, is very pleased with the response: 'Our research has shown overwhelmingly that the lifeguard is viewed by children as a very positive role model. A water safety message delivered by lifeguards has the best chance of being received and we look forward to Sega joining our life-saving campaign.'

Look to the future...

Well, you've seen what Sega has been up to in 1993 but what about the future? What have the big 'S' got lined up for the new year?

We've managed top grab a sneaky peek at a release schedule for every game planned for 1994. Just take a look at some of these beauties...



Mega Drive

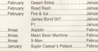
To Jam & Earl 2 .... January
Greatest Heavyweights .... January
Body Count .... January
Mean Bean Machine .... January
Eternal Champions .... January
Young Indy .... January
Dragon's Revenge .... January
F117 — Night Storm .... January
Gunship .... January
Ren & Stimpy .... February
Pebble Beach Golf .... February
Sonic 3 .... February
Bubba 'N' Stix .... February
Dune — Battle of Arrakis .... February
The Hulk .... February

Mega-CD

Indiana Jones .... January
Jo Montana .... January
Wonderdog .... January
Dune .... January
Another World .... January
Jurrasic Park .... February
Ground Zero Texas .... February
Terminator .... February

Game Gear

Road Runner .... Xmas
Cool Spot .... Xmas
The Jungle Book .... Xmas
Donald Duck 2 .... January
Asterix — The Secret Mission .... January
Zool .... January
Desert Strike .... January
Road Rash .... January
Fire & Ice .... January
James Bond 007 .... January
F1 .... January
Aladdin .... February
Mean Bean Machine .... February
X-Men .... February
Super Caesar's Palace .... February



Grub's up!





As Sega gears up for the big Christmas blitz, they've been promoting their three *Sonic* games in *Burger Kings* throughout the country. The aim is to publicise the launch of three *Sonic* carts — *Sonic Spinball, Sonic Chaos* and *Sonic CD*.

Special Sonic meals are on offer in 210 *Burger King* outlets. The meal comes with a free model figure from the game including Sonic, Tails and Robotnik. *Burger King* support the joint-venture with a huge TV promotion costing them upward of £250,000. So chow down with Sonic, a Whopper and regular fries too go!

When it comes to console magazines reviews are what it's all about. You want to find out what's hot and what's a pile of tripe in the Mega Drive world so you come to the blokes who are in the know hoping that they will show you the light and tell you what to spend your money on. Well here is the best of their collective knowledge over the past few months…

Who, What, When, Where, How much?

WHAT: the game name — Immortal Kombat

ON WHAT: which system

Santa

HOW MUCH: the price — £2.50

THE OBVIOUS: blood, sweat and tears go into these

Score	Category
97	Graphics
84	Sound
01	Playability
99	Lastability

99 — What a wonderful game this really is — honest!

WHEN: the release date — Out: To lunch

WHERE: who to get it from

WHO: the distributor — ☎ 999

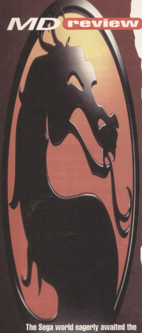
The guys of Sega Force Mega unite!

Steve Shields
Adrian Pitt
Mat Yeo
Warren Lapworth
Paul Wooding
Tim Hirschmann
Mark Smith
Stix Jones
Chris Marke
Marc Powell

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mega drive reviews

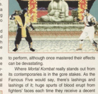


Mortal

The big beat-'em-up bandwagon just keeps rolling along, but due to the graphic nature of the violence between the title and 'Game Over' screens of this particular release, it's set for a bumpy ride. Gameplay follows the tried and tested formula for this sort of thing, with one player competing against computer-controlled opponents or two fighting one-on-one.

The object is to gain supremacy in a grand tournament. There are five skill levels and seven different characters to choose from, each with their own strengths but no discernible weaknesses.

All the standard beat-'em-up moves are included, with kicks, jumps, punches and the like all accessed easily and quickly via the joypad, and each having a varied effect upon the opposition's power bar. The characters' special moves, on the other hand, take much more skill to perform, although once mastered their effects can be devastating.



Liu Kang gets a kick outta his system.

Where *Mortal Kombat* really stands out from its contemporaries is in the gore stakes. As the Famous Five would say, there's lashings and lashings of it; huge spurts of blood erupt from fighters' faces each time they receive a decent smack in the gob, which then drip to the ground in grisly pools before gradually draining away.

The so-called 'death moves' are none too pretty, either: see the special 'Death Or Gory' box elsewhere in this review for details on what, exactly, the fuss is all about…

A fighting chance

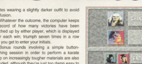
Two-player games allow each person to select a character of their choice from the seven available, then enter a 'best of three' match in one of five scrolling arenas. The game also allows both players to select the same character, one of the

The Sega world eagerly awaited the arrival of the game to beat Nintendo's *Street Fighter II* back in September. Monday 13th was the day — Mortal Monday. Acclaim Entertainment shipped 500,000 copies in the first day and the game delivered what it had promised — blood, gore and some horrifically detailed death moves. Prepare to enter *Mortal Kombat*!



Sub Zero looks like he's met his match this time, as Scorpion flies in for the kill.

Kombat

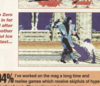






More ketchup, anyone? Liu Kang discovers that this pit ain't bottomless — the hard way!





Sub Zero moves in for the kill after another successful Ice Blast...

sprites wearing a slightly darker outfit to avoid confusion.

Whatever the outcome, the computer keeps a record of how many victories have been notched up by either player, which is displayed after each win; triumph seven times in a row and you get to enter your initials.

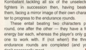
Bonus rounds involving a simple button-bashing session in order to perform a karate chop on increasingly tougher materials are also included, although they're just too damn easy to be any fun. And then there's the mysterious Reptile Man, but we'll leave him for you to discover as everyone loves a surprise, don't they? Well, okay then, maybe not this one!

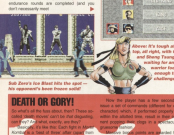
Single spar

Single-player games see the hopeful Kombatant tackling all six of the unselected fighters in succession then, having beaten them, facing a mirror image of their own character to progress to the endurance rounds.

These entail beating two characters per round, one after the other — they have a full energy bar each, whereas the player's only got one to work with. If (not when!) the three endurance rounds are completed (and you don't necessarily meet ▶







Above: It's tough at the top, all right, with Goro and Sheng Tsung just waiting for any warrior foolish enough to challenge 'em.

Sub Zero's Ice Blast hits the spot — his opponent's been frozen solid!

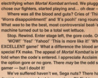
DEATH OR GORY!

So what's all the fuss about, then? These so-called 'death moves' can't be *that* disgusting, can they? And what, exactly, are they?

Basically, it's like this: Each fight in *Mortal Kombat* is a 'best of three' affair (apart from the endurance bouts — see preview). If a player wins the first round by knocking their opponent's energy bar down to zero, then does the same in the second or third bout, the opponent staggers for a moment while the 'Finish Him/Her' command appears.

Now the player has a few seconds to issue a set of commands (different for each character) which, if performed properly and within the allotted time, result in their opponent popping their clogs in a spectacularly gruesome fashion.

Massive bonus points are awarded for a successful kill and few things in the gaming world offer the same degree of satisfaction. Mind you, there are few things as frustrating as standing there helplessly, waiting for someone to perform a death move on *YOU*, so it cuts both ways!



ADE 94% I've worked on the mag a long time and realise games which receive skipfuls of hype tend to be a pile of cack. The excitement, however, was electrifying when *Mortal Kombat* arrived. We plugged-in the cart, chose our fighters, started playing and... oh dear — no gore!

Where was all the blood and guts? Cries of 'This is crap!' 'Worra disappointment!' and 'It's pooh!' rang round the office. What *was* to be the best, most controversial beat-'em-up on *any* machine turned out to be a total wet lettuce.

Stop. Rewind. Enter stage left, the gore code. Okay — play!

'WOW!' 'Yes!' 'Yahoo!' 'This is more like it!' 'What an EXCELLENT game!' What a difference the blood and gory special FX make. The appeal of *Mortal Kombat* is increased ten-fold when the code's entered. I appreciate Acclaim have given the option gore or no gore. There *may* be the odd squeamish gamer — but I doubt it!

We've suffered haven't we, Sega nuts? There hasn't been a decent one-on-one beat-'em-up since *Pit Fighter* and *that* appeared in the first issue of SEGA FORCE!

I can't find fault with *MK*. The graphics are superb throughout. The fighters' animation is the best you'll see on the Mega Drive and the moves each character executes are absolutely astounding. There are *so* many manoeuvres. The challenge is which technique to use and when. The gutsy sound FX are great and the oriental theme tunes suit the game down to the ground.

You'll never tire of *Mortal Kombat*. If you knock the DNA out of the computer-controlled opponents, pit your wits against a mate; you'll play till the cows come home. *Mortal Kombat* lives up to its hype. You just *have* get this game.

Phew! All that and I didn't mention *Street Fighter II*... Doh!



▶ all six opponents; some fighters often appear more than once), it's time to meet Goro.

This ferocious four-armed fellow makes his debut the second you defeat the last endurance round opponent. He's certainly no pushover, demonstrated by the fact that he's supposedly held the Mortal Kombat title for the past 500 years!

Provided you've honed your skills to a fine degree, you'll eventually floor the beggar, but don't for a minute think that brings instant imortality. For Goro, big as he is, has a master — Shang Tsung. And this guy's *really* heavy…

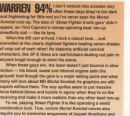
Taking the form of *any* of the *Mortal Kombat* fighters, he can swap between personas at will, instantly, and with little or no regard for your safety and well being. Tricky enough on the easiest skill level, just wait till you face him on the hardest!

Graphics are excellent throughout, each character digitised from real film images of proper actors and animated perfectly. Sound, too, is nothing short of brilliant, with decent tunes and clear, arcade-perfect speech samples adding to the atmosphere enormously.

Watch out, *Street Fighter II — Mortal Kombat* is poised for the kill! ■



Rayden attempts the tricky tied-shoelace manoeuvre while Scorpion checks the time on his new Sekonda.



WARREN 94% I don't venture into arcades very often these days (they're too dark and frightening for little me) so I've never seen the *Mortal Kombat* coin-op. The idea of '*Street Fighter II* with gore' didn't appeal, as I find Capcom's money-spinning beat-'em-up dreadfully dull — like its fans.

When the MD cart arrived, I took a casual look… and marvelled at the clearly digitised fighters beating seven shades of crap out of each other! No blatantly artificial carnival characters, like *SF II*, these are *real* bruisers dealing out pain to anyone tough enough to enter the arena.

When these guys win, the loser doesn't just bounce in slow motion — his blood, sweat and internal organs stain the ground! And though the gore is a major selling point and what many will love about MD *Mortal Kombat*, its graphics are still superb without them. The way sprites seem to put massive force behind blows and buckle in agony when they're on the receiving end make it more realistic than any other beat-'em-up.

To me, playing *Street Fighter II* is like operating a weird combination lock. True, certain *Mortal Kombat* moves also require you to memorise sequences of joypad directions and button presses, but they don't overwhelm the gameplay and often have a logical connection to the result onscreen. The many diverse moves *every* character has at their disposal make *MK* fights so much more interesting than those in *SF II*.

Up against the superlative graphics, gritty sounds, addictive gameplay and massive challenge of *Mortal Kombat*, Capcom's 'blockbuster' has lost the match before it's even arrived. I wonder what Acclaim's death move is…?

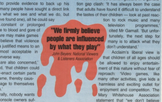
The Mary Whitehouse Experience

Okay, so it's been established that *Mortal Kombat*'s a pretty gruesome affair (once you've input that all-important code, of course!), and the great video game violence debate is sure to gather steam as a result. But what kind of (hard) line will the pundits pursue this time? Surely it's all been said before?

Instead of sitting back and waiting for it all to karate-kick off, we grabbed the bull by the horns and invited comments which would illustrate the arguments for and against.

We began with **Mary Whitehouse's National Viewers & Listeners Association**, whose General Secretary, John Beyer, issued these words of wisdom:

'Quite frankly, we don't believe these games are good for anybody, and the sooner the manufacturers realise what harm they're doing the better,' he said. But when challenged to provide evidence to back up his claims (many people have sought a direct link between what we see and what we do, but none have found one), all he could say was '…constant or prolonged exposure to blood and gore of this nature may make games players believe that violence can be a justified means to an end. Almost acceptable in some perverse way.



'We are also concerned,' he added, 'that children could try to re-enact certain parts of the game, thereby causing damage to themselves or others.'

Naturally, nobody wants to see console owners suffering in any way whatsoever from the games they play, least of all us. But we were still having difficulty accepting the fact that games do, in fact, have any adverse effect.

'We firmly believe that people *are* influenced by what they play,' he stipulated, 'and that their behaviour can be directly affected by what they watch onscreen. The fact that this game needs a special password or such like before children are exposed to it isn't an issue,' he warned, 'as kids today are very resourceful and, even if the code weren't included in the manual, they would still be able to find out what it is with little difficulty.

'Some children are able to overcome the effects,' he conceded, 'although many others are vulnerable. What these games do is rot the conscience and can make people begin to act out their fantasies.' Amazingly, according to Mr Beyer, 'even traditional roleplaying games can do the same thing.'

Despite being unable to prove any of the Association's claims, either medically or any other way, Mr Beyer stuck to his guns (even though they appeared to be firing blanks!).

For the flip-side on the gore debate, we turned to Acclaim themselves. Producers of the home console version of *Mortal Kombat*, if anyone would be prepared to defend the violence in print, it was surely they…

Moral combat

Managing Director of **Acclaim UK**, Nick Garnall, hit back at the National Viewers & Listeners Association in no uncertain terms, dismissing John Beyer's statements as 'very rash and badly-supported arguments. Mr Beyer's claim that they "rot the conscience" is a good example' he added, saying '…this is nothing short of alarmist nonsense. Where is the evidence?'

The code to 'protect' younger children from *Mortal Kombat*'s famed gore and appease parents seems to be a token gesture in a generation gap clash: 'It has always been the case that adults have found it difficult to understand the tastes of their children — look at past reaction to rock music and many television programmes,' cited Mr Garnall. 'But unfortunately, the next step for many is to attack what they don't understand.'

Acclaim's liberal view is that children of all ages should be allowed to enjoy entertainment of this nature without fear of reproach: 'Video games, like many other activities, give kids a harmless and exciting outlet for enjoyment and competition. The Mary Whitehouse Association statement that "we don't believe these games are good for anyone" simply reveals an ignorance of the facts and a blinkered unwillingness to accommodate other peoples likes and tastes.'

Fair comment, as far as SEGA FORCE MEGA is concerned. After all, our government



and many like them are at least partly responsible for global atrocities each year, and they don't have to justify their actions to us or, indeed, anyone.

If a direct link between the games we play and the way we behave is ever made, we'll be the first to sit up and take notice. Meanwhile, though, we're more inclined to believe that the act of playing a violent game such as *Mortal Kombat* is more likely to satiate the gamer's innate capacity for violence than spur them into physical action. What do *you* think?

PAUL 93% If you're one of the thousands of Mega Drive owners who are waiting with bated breath for *Street Fighter II*, don't waste your time. *Mortal Kombat* wipes the floor with Ryu and his puny mates — they're no competition for any of the fighters vying for Goro's crown.

The first things you notice about *MK* are the incredibly clear digitised graphics — if you were impressed by *Pit Fighter*'s visuals these will blow your mind. Actors were used to make the game look as real as possible and this is the first time great digitised graphics haven't hindered an MD cart's gameplay.

Since it's a 16 Meg cart, there are loads and loads of moves. Learning them takes a few minutes, mastering them takes ages! You're probably well aware of the controversial death moves and a few parents may understandably be slightly worried. Fear not, Acclaim, sensible chaps that they are, have excluded blood and guts from the standard game mode.

Mortal Kombat's a great beat-'em-up which dumps on *Street Fighter II*. One-player games are good and two-player matches are an absolute scream (check out your mate's face when you rip his head off and survey his spinal cord!). What more can I say except make sure you've a few spare quid in September.

A nice clean punch before the code...

...and a messy one after it's entered.

Goro must do a lot of work with weights — just look at the size of his forearms!

Below: Reptile Man makes a rare appearance — this green meanie plays hard to get...

BLOODY REVELATIONS

With beheadings, hearts torn from chests and bodies burned to a cinder, there's already been much wailing and gnashing of teeth concerning the amount of graphic violence in *Mortal Kombat* — and the cart hasn't even been released yet!

The original coin-op was a blood-thirsty affair indeed, literally dripping in gory effects and, as usual, our moral guardians are concerned that young minds may be affected.

We at SEGA FORCE MEGA credit games players with more intelligence, however, and are happy to endorse the product to the full. After all, if anyone's offended by it, they don't have to play it, do they?

Acclaim, on the other hand, have taken the accusations rather more seriously, that's why their Mega Drive version of the game is totally bereft of bloody thrills (or spills). That's right — the gore has gorn! Or has it...?

The score on the gore

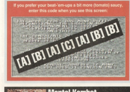
In fact, the blood 'n' thunder elements that helped make the arcade game such a success *are* there in full, but plug in the cart and you won't witness one drop of the crimson motion lotion.

Why? Because Acclaim figured it would be 'safer' to conceal the gore effects entirely, only allowing those in possession of a special code to access 'em, thereby appeasing the moral minority while still providing the kind of game many people, judging by the coin-op's success, like to play.

Anyone who buys the game will find the special code in the manual — so it's said, but we've yet to see a copy — but Acclaim aren't making a big song and dance about it.

To our minds, this is the perfect solution. After all, it takes only a few seconds to enter the special code, and most *Mortal Kombat*ants aren't going to quibble over that. On the other hand, those who think the gore elements are unnecessary or just plain sick — they *are* purely cosmetic, after all — needn't 'suffer' them.

If you prefer your beat-'em-ups a bit more (tomato) saucy, enter this code when you see this screen:



Mortal Kombat

Acclaim
£49.99

91	Graphics
88	Sound
92	Playability
94	Lastability

94

A gruesome game but none the worse for it. Get *Mortal Kombat*

Arcade conversion ☎ 071 344 5000



MD review

Jurassic

You've read the novel, ate from the sandwich box, slept under the duvet covers and worn the slippers — now you can play the Mega Drive game of Steven Spielberg's box office smash hit *Jurassic Park*.

The game allows you to take one of two roles. In the first you can become paleontologist Dr. Alan Grant, while in the second you take the part of a cunning and surprisingly intelligent Raptor.

As Dr. Grant, you find yourself stranded deep within the park, after your car has been demolished by the vicious T Rex (Remember those awesome scenes in the movie of Rex setting about the cars, well watch something similar in the superb digitised clips that comprise the games intro). To make matters worse a violent storm has destroyed the electric fences that pen in the dinosaurs, so Grant has to fight his way through poison spitting Dilophosaurs, leech-like Compys, low-flying Pterodactyls and other prehistoric monsters to return to the other humans.

You begin your mission to escape the island deep within the jungle. Your first obstacle is a giant Triceratops, who will allow you to leap on his back to pass by as long as you don't antagonize him. Dr. Grant is not entirely defenceless. He has a wide range of weapons to collect as he moves around each level of this platform game. These range from tranquilliser darts to electric guns to stun grenades. None of these weapons will kill the dinosaurs, but they will incapacitate them long enough for you to pass by. If you should be bitten by a dinosaur there are also first aid boxes to be found, which will replenish your energy levels.

The familiar logo begins your prehistoric challenge

Raptor on the loose

The Raptor game runs along very similar lines. Obviously you are now a dinosaur hunting down Dr. Grant, but the platform levels are exactly the same in each game. The difference being here of course that, as the Raptor, you have to munch and maim the human guards, as well as avoiding the dinosaurs that attach you.

The Raptor has broken out of its cage after the failure of the electric fences. It is the perfect killing machine, allowing you to attack your enemies with razor sharp claws or bone crunching teeth. By pressing up and jump you can make the Raptor leap huge distances, which becomes especially necessary when you enter the power station on level 2. It is also important to remember that Raptors cannot swim when you enter the pump station. The Raptor must also feed, so be sure to eat the turkey drumsticks that can be found strewn along the levels (that damn Bernard Matthews gets everywhere!). You can also raise your energy levels by eating the pint-sized Compys.

Both playing the Raptor or Dr Grant presents you with the problems of a traditional platformer. The game will inevitably be a hit, simply because of the enormous success and hype that surrounds the film. However can the game be regarded as a worthy representation of the film? While our reviewers ponder that question I think its time for another Compy burger!

Welcome to Jurassic Park.

Now where has that Mr T. Rex got to?

...Oh, there he is!

Park

The Raptor begins it's journey through the jungle looking for man and beast.

MARC 85% Well this is the game of the most hyped and possibly the most successful film of all time. I'm happy to say that, for a change, they have actually put a bit of thought into a film conversion rather than churning out the usual walk-along-and-shoot-things game. *Jurassic Park*, the game, is enjoyable to play and captures the mood of the film perfectly.

Don't be fooled by the hype surrounding *Jurassic Park* and ignore this as just another film tie-in .There is in fact a decent game hidden inside — it's like a Flashback with dinosaurs. The game has a variety of options, containing two games in which you can either play as a human or as a Raptor. This gives the game a whole new depth and really increases the playability .

The only thing that varies from the film is that the game actually seems to be based more on the book, with the river section which never appeared in the film along with a few new dinosaurs.

With it's excellently moody graphics and sound-track this is one film tie-in that is actually fun to play. If this is what can be achieved with the Mega Drive, I can't wait for the CD version!

Dr. Grant regains conciousness deep in the islands jungle.

The Raptor can chew and kick other dinosaurs or people. It also has a tasty turkey drumstick on it's left.

As long as you don't hurt him, the Triceratops is gentle enough.

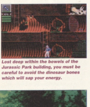
Use the jungle vines to cross dangerous drops

Like Dr. Grant, the Raptor has to pass through the mountain caves.

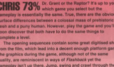
Make sure you choose the right route otherwise the Raptor will plummet to it's death.

Before the storm, the Raptor cage was secure enough, now we're not so sure!

And finally the Raptor enters the door to the power station.

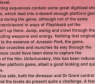


Lost deep within the bowels of the Jurassic Park building, you must be careful to avoid the dinosaur bones which will sap your energy.



CHRIS 73% Dr. Grant or the Raptor? It's up to you which game you select but the gameplay is essentially the same. True, there are the obvious surface differences between a colossal mass of prehistoric flesh and a puny human. However, play the game and you'll soon discover that both have to do the same things to complete a level.

The opening sequences contain some great digitised shots from the film, which lead into a decent enough platform game. The graphics during the game, although not of the same quality, are reminiscent in ways of *Flashback* yet the gameplay isn't up there. Jump, swing and crawl through the levels, collecting weapons and energy. Nothing that original there, but it is the essence of *Jurassic Park*, the game.



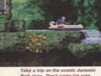
The Raptor crunches and munches its way through the levels, yet more could have been done to capture the atmosphere of the film. Unfortunately, this has been reduced to just another platform game, albeit a good looking and quite playable one.

On the plus side, both the dinosaur and Dr Grant control very well, and the levels do present quite a challenge. A few more challenges confront the Doctor in the form of a river and volcano section, while the Raptor gets more of the fun — check out the canyon stage in which it gets to push rocks on top of hapless guards!

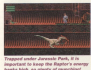
However, it's a shame that *Jurassic Park* couldn't have been given that little bit extra in terms of action and adventure. After all, the film was all about special effects and non-stop excitement, which should have been interpreted into the game. Then we might have had a tie-in that really did justice to a brilliant movie.







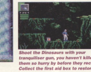
Take a trip on the scenic Jurassic Park river. Don't worry I'm sure there's no dinosaurs about...



Trapped under Jurassic Park, it is important to keep the Raptor's energy banks high, so plenty of munching!



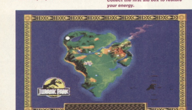
...well maybe just a few!



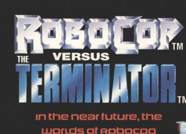
Shoot the Dinosaurs with your tranquiliser gun, you haven't killed them so hurry by before they recover. Collect the first aid box to restore your energy.



Pass the Brachiosaur to complete the first level.

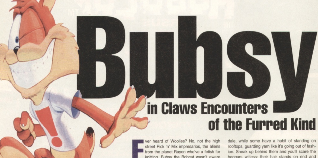





ROBOCOP TM
THE VERSUS
TERMINATOR TM


Virgin





Bubsy in Claws Encounters of the Furred Kind

Bubsy's a fleet-footed feline but also travels by roller-coaster, train, trampoline and rocket.

October was a month pounced on by Bubsy the Bobcat, the star of a manic platform game. He may only have nine lives but he'll still put up a good fight against the aliens out to steal the world's yarnball supplies. Accolade have a great character here — so expect a sequel!

Ever heard of Woolies? No, not the high street Pick 'n' Mix impresarios, the aliens from the planet Rayon who've a fetish for knitting. Bubsy the Bobcat wasn't aware Woolies existed either, until their spaceship crash-landed near his home.

Their craft ran out of fuel because the technologically-advanced high-fibre plasma engines packed up. Their only means of getting airborne is to replace the lost fibre, pronto.

You'd think bran flakes or bananas would do the trick, right? Not for the Woolies: *their* flying machine's powered by yarnballs (didn't we say 'technologically advanced'? —Ade). If the woolly ones don't find yarn fast, they won't see Rayon or their queens, Poly and Esther, ever again.

The Woolies weren't worried. They'd heard this planet's choc-full of blue-haired grannies who take to knitting when the soaps are on. However, they hadn't banked on a hip 'n' happening bobcat throwing a spanner in the works. Bubsy would rather eat his own kitty litter than surrender his yarnball collection.

Spinning a yarn

So 'tis here our 'tail' begins. As Bubsy, race around five radically different worlds of three areas each, collecting yarn and dispatching aliens. You can easily dispose of these cretins by bouncing on their heads.

In the course of running, jumping and somersaulting around like a thing possessed, you find Woolies strutting their funky thang over hill and dale, while some have a habit of standing on rooftops, guarding yarn like it's going out of fashion. Sneak up behind them and you'll scare the beggars witless; their hair stands on end and their eyes pop out on stalks.

But if they see you coming, some take a deep breath — big, bad wolf fashion — and attempt to blow you off buildings. Others bounce up and down, generally getting in the way, while the more cunning Woolies have discovered just how messy rotten eggs are and fire them from catapults when you're in range.

A selection of power-ups make life a little easier: Crates of yarn bump up your score, explosives take you to greater heights, black T-shirts make Bubsy invisible, flashing shirts scare the enemy and white ones grant extra lives, according to the number emblazoned on the front.

Woolly bully

In a bid for the quiet life, slippers by the fire, an endless supply of cat-nip and all that jazz, Bubsy visits the fun fair to ride the roller-coaster, encounters the Woolies' wrath on a circus train and negotiates cacti, gun-totin' desert rats and sharks, of all things, in a canyon.

Wherever you are, keep an eye open for caves and special portals. More often than not, they warp you to a different section of the level, but occasionally you're teleported to a bonus stage and ride a log flume, collecting balls and power-ups as you make your descent into pools below. Falls aren't always fatal: press button [A]

Wait for these crazy trains to zoom down the tracks before making a move.



Stop! Look around before you leap by holding [C] and moving the D-pad.



Kitty litter

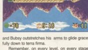


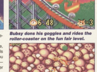
Grab this for an extra life

This shirt gives two lives

Makes Bubsy invisible

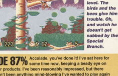
The shirt of invincibility





Bubsy dons his goggles and rides the roller-coaster on the fun fair level.

This is tricky. Stay on the raft until you see a platform or small island.



Bubsy can't see the wood for the trees on the third level. The birds and the bees give him trouble. Oh, and watch he doesn't get nabbed by the Special Branch.

and Bubsy outstretches his arms to glide gracefully down to terra firma.

Remember, on every level, on every stage, yarnballs are where it's at. The more yarnballs you collect, the greater your bonus when you complete a stage. There's a time bonus, too — the quicker you complete the round, the higher your score.

If there's a huge yarnball at the end of a stage, it *may* spout more balls of that luvverly high-fibre material for you to grab. If not, you can bet your next can of Whiskas there's an end-of-level guardian waiting to turn you into bobcat burgers. ■

What a cat-astrophe!



ADE 87% Accolade, you've done it! I've sat here for some time now, keeping a beady eye on your products. I've been reasonably impressed, but there hasn't been anything mind-blowing I've wanted to play again and again. But sit me down with *Bubsy* and you won't get me off the Mega Drive! It's absolutely stunning.

First off, the graphics — *Sonic*-beating stuff, without a doubt. The animation of the cool dude when he runs, leaps, somersaults and glides is smooth and without fault.

There are loads of ways Bubsy kicks the bucket, each beautifully portrayed. Our feline friend shatters into tiny pieces, bursts like a balloon, gets squashed when he falls from a great height and dons a pirate's hat and waves a white flag as he sinks underwater.

Another eye-popping visual effect takes place when Bubsy falls into a log flume. At one stage, the whole screen flips when the logs turn upside down. Well smart.

Some may find *Bubsy*'s gameplay a touch monotonous — collecting yarnballs isn't everyone's cup of tea — but there's more to it than first meets the eye. Each stage is *huge*. I was forever finding areas I hadn't seen before, secret passages I never knew existed and masses of power-ups tucked away in far-flung corners.

Don't give up on the fun fair stage. It's easy to get frustrated, because the roller coaster rails transform the level into a mini-maze. You'll find the way out if you persevere — trust me.

Sound is excellent — you'll be whistling the theme tunes in no time. There are some smashing sound FX and speech from Bubsy himself.

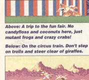
Attention, all platform freaks. Here's a classy product you just *have* to buy. Congratulations, Accolade, your best game to date, methinks.



Bubsy's full of slapstick moments — look out for that banana skin!

Above: A trip to the fun fair. No candyfloss and coconuts here, just mutant frogs and crazy crabs!

Below: On the circus train. Don't step on trolls and steer clear of giraffes.



8 out of 10 owners...





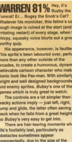
Crates of yarn help bump up your score

Burst this bubble and get loads of points

Jump on this and you're awarded a continue

A crateful of tacks — dangerous to step on





WARREN 81% Hey, it's Buzby the Tomcat! Er... Bugsy the Snob's Cat? Whatever his monicker, this feline's cool, tough image is ruined at the start (and irritating *restart*) of every stage, when his chirpy, squeaky voice blurts out a groan-worthy quip.

His appearance, however, is faultless. This sprite's been laboured over, perhaps more than any other outside of the arcades, to create a humorous, dynamic, believable cartoon character who makes Sonic look like Pac-man. With similarly bright and well designed backgrounds and enemy sprites, *Bubsy's* one of the few games which is truly great to watch.

The controls are a lot simpler than his wacky actions imply — just left, right, jump and glide, the latter often saving his neck when he falls from a great height — so *Bubsy's* very easy to get into.

There are hair-tearing moments when a life's foolishly lost, particularly as obstacles sometimes appear unexpectedly, due to the size of the graphics, but there's a generous time limit so you can take your time.

The only doubt hovering over *Bubsy* is in the lastability department (go through Ladies' Lingerie — eventually — and turn left at Small Appliances). Irritatingly tricky and maze-like sections are enough for many to switch off, vowing never to play again. If they return and conquer their problems, the passwords and otherwise straightforward levels put paid to the entire game.

Like Spielberg's *Jurassic Park* at the cinema, *Bubsy* doesn't quite live up to all the hype: it's amazing to look at but there's little substance behind it. Well worth a try, though, if only to see what the fuss is all about.

Now you see him...now you don't!



You never know what'll happen if you enter a cave: some take you back a few screens, some forwards, while others contain hidden bonus levels.



Bubsy the Bobcat

Accolade
£39.99

92	Graphics
83	Sound
86	Playability
79	Lastability

84

A purr-fect platform game. Stunning visuals and superb gameplay.

Platform

☎ 081 877 0880

Gunstar

Once again, the tranquillity of the Earth has been shattered. This time an army of evil Cyborgs, who look strangely like a team of American footballers, have over-run the world's defences so that their leader can take complete control of every aspect of life. To ensure his domination, this dastardly desperado has also cast an evil spell that prevents any form of rebellion.

Luckily for the world, a benevolent professor, Dr. Blue, has discovered how to break the spell and rescue everyone. He has enlisted the help of two superheroes, able to resist the Cyborg's evil spell.

The Doctor informs our saviours that they must collect the gems hidden around the world; when brought together these will shatter the dictator's grip over the minds of the people.

So begins the quest of the *Gunstar Heroes*, over seven levels of intense action.

Within each level there are a mass of sub-levels, each progressively harder. You can choose to play a one or two-player simultaneous game, but be warned; either way it's tough going, and plenty of butt needs kicked along the way! *(a bit like producing SFM — ed)*

After choosing a mode of play, next step is to select how your character uses his weapon (no Finbarr Saunders jokes please).

This is entirely down to personal preference. You can either move as you fire, or utilise eight directional shots from a standing position.

Up the arsenal

Once this decision is made, you're next job is to select a weapon from the arsenal consisting of: Force Fire — which fires rapidly at a specific point; Lightning — an intense power that fires through the enemies to hit those coming in behind; Chaser Beam — homes in on an opponent and hunts him down wherever he goes; or the Flamethrower — most effective in close combat.

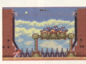
Select your style of shot and choice of weapon before your quest begins.



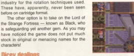
Heroes

The Doctor will then ask you to select a starting point within the game from the first four levels. These stages are: the Ancient Ruins — where the first gem was dug up and now has to be collected by the heroes, definitely easier said than done; The Underground Mine — which is negotiated in a mining cart in order to rescue the good scientist's brother, Dr. Green; The Flying Battleship — has to be prevented from leaving so that you can battle Captain Orange for another of the gems. Incidentally, the battleship has been heralded within the industry for the rotation techniques used. These have, apparently, never been seen before on cartridge format.

The other option is to take on the Lord of the Strange Fortress — known as Black, who is safeguarding yet another gem. As you may have noticed the game does not put much stock in original or menacing names for the characters!









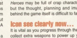
Dicey dealings

The other levels include a cunning — but deadly — board game that has our hero hurling a dice to decide his fate. Depending on what he throws he could come up against a variety of villains, earn bonus weapons and energy or alternatively lose all. The aim is to get around the traditional board without falling victim to the many dangers it holds. A sort of death by Ludo if you like!

As in most action/platform games there is a big boss at the end of each level. You must overcome each fiend to progress. These bosses get more inventive and complex further into the game.

Take the guardian of Dr. Green on level two for example. This marvel of modern technology changes form seven times before he is finally vanquished. His metamorphosis include Soldier Force — a huge robot, Tails Force — a mechanical serpent, Tiger Force, Eagle Force, Blaster Force — a self-loading pistol, Urchin Force, Crab Force and Sega Force *(sure? -ed)*

Considering this boss is of an early level, you can begin to comprehend the complexity and imagination used later on. *Gunstar Heroes* may be full of crap character names but the thought, planning and imagination behind the game itself is difficult to fault.



Icon see clearly now...

It is vital as you progress through the game to collect extra weapons to power up your agile hero. However, on many levels this can prove immensely difficult.

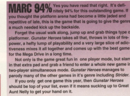
To activate the extras you have to blast the low flying bugs that cross the screen, no problem eh? Well, actually, yes it is. The action is so fast and furious that you will probably be surrounded by enemies when the different icons drop from the sky, making collection a trifle tricky. This problem is compounded by the pace at which your hero crosses the screen on many levels, for example when you are down in the ▶

MARC 94% Yes you have read that right. It's definitely 94% for this outstanding game. If you thought the platform arena had become a little jaded and repetitive of late, this is the game that is going to give the genre a much needed kick up the backside.

Forget the usual walk along, jump up and grab things type of platformer. *Gunstar Heroes* takes all that, throws in lots of fire-power, a hefty lump of playability and a very large slice of addictiveness mixes it all together and comes up with the best game for the Mega Drive in a long time.

Not only is the game great fun in one player mode, but slam in that extra pad and grab a friend to enter a whole new game in two-player simultaneous mode. *Gunstar Heroes* manages to parody many of the other games in it's genre including *Strider*.

If you only get one game this year, then *Gunstar Heroes* should be top of your list, even if it means sucking up to Great Aunt Nelly to get your hand on it.





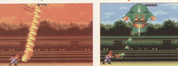
Fast-paced, furious, ferocious – phew! You ain't seen nothing yet.



The guards on the battleship take no prisoners.



When it comes to their machines, the big bosses don't mess about!



Take that ...



...and that! Our hero never says die!



Is this a nice relaxing board game?

MD review

▶ murky depths of the mine shafts there is no way of slowing your speed as you hurtle towards the inevitable confrontation with a big boss. Without tremendous agility and a quick trigger-finger most things will simply pass you by.

To ease your troubles slightly, the *Gunstar Heroes* are blessed with a number of death-defying abilities. They can leap enormous distances by double clicking on the jump button, have a great line in crunching karate kicks and are also able to hang from the most poorly appointed of ledges. All in a days work I suppose when you're saving the world!

Thankfully, there's a continue option, helping you struggle through the game. Used with care, this will allow you to restart at a point just before you face one of the mini-bosses on the sub-levels.

On some games this would make things a little too easy to complete, however, here infinite continues are vital. Without them you would probably be grubbing around on the early levels for a long, long time.

In order to aid your desperation to bash, slash and generally fumble your way into the game you can select a difficulty level. On hard, you'll fight all seven morphs on level two for instance, while easy will only pit you against three of them. In this game there is no shame in starting out on easy. Just ask the sub-editor. He spent so long playing the game on this level that he hasn't read a single bit of the text in this issue of *SFM*! ■

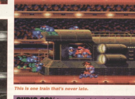
Down in the mines ...

Something sinister was afoot...

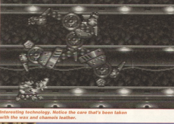
but it probably didn't help that our hero fell down here — berk!



Oh well, I'll just have to make the best of it. Maybe if I give this evil looking boss a thrashing things will start to look up.



This is one train that's never late.



Interesting technology. Notice the care that's been taken with the wax and chamois leather.

Gunstar Heroes looking, well, pretty dam heroic actually!

CHRIS 92% Impressed? You bet your bottom dollar! This is definitely my choice for game of the month. Fast, furious, fornicating action... Well fast and furious anyway!

Seriously though, everything about this game cries out winner! The graphics are superb, with smart backdrops and incredibly well-animated space characters, just check out the movement and firepower of any of the big bosses for confirmation of this. The animation of the heroes is also cool as they slide effortlessly across the screen, dangling from ledges or hurling enemies into oblivion. Add the bonus of sound effects that contribute nicely to the overall atmosphere of the game and you'll see what I mean.

The biggest bonus to *Gunstar Heroes* is it's tremendous variety. The gameplay never gets monotonous, with a massive variety of levels and sub-stages. I reall must mention the great boardgame that makes up level five. This is original and surprisingly addictive.

What more can I say? A great game, compliment indeed from a renowned anti-platformer such as myself, which will make a welcome addition to anyone's library of MD masterpieces.



Our hero sets out on his quest through the terrors of the first level.

One thing he didn't expect to come up against was a huge phallic symbol!

Well, here we are a little bit further into Level 1.

Scale this mountain if you hope to complete the level.

A boss made entirely of giant slabs of concrete. Now that's original.

It's just like surfing dude. Only your sliding at breakneck speed down a mountain!

Watch out for those deadly claws. Nobody told them it's rude to punch.

This boss uses his agricultural threshing machine to attack our hero.

...And now he's even throwing stink bombs as well. Come on, play the game!

'Where do I go from here? Any ideas you guys ... hey don't leave ... please!'

Get through the maze and reach the goal to progress to the next stage.

Take that you evil fiend! Weird machines abound in this superb platformer...



Sensible

English football is a bit of a sore subject after the tragic 10 second goal in the match against San Marino but *Sensible Soccer* is enough to even get Graham Taylor smiling again — it's a great soccer sim that's lots of fun for two-players.

Sensible Soccer's been around in one guise or another for some time. It usually receives rave reviews and has a reputation as one of the top football-simulations. This praise is achieved with a simplicity of design and gameplay that's rare for a game as successful as this.

Like all soccer-sims, you begin by selecting your difficulty level, the type of competition which you wish to compete and the team you'll control. The line-ups available are the club teams competing in Europe this season and a selection of international squads.

Once you've set the options, select the weather conditions, length of the game and, just before kick-off, your team members and formation. These tactics can be changed at any time by calling up your team bench, with a manager who looks suspiciously like Graham Souness!

On the ball

Once into the game, weather conditions have a direct effect on the nature of the match. A muddy pitch bogs the game down, making it difficult to pass the ball to feet, while an icy surface sees the ball sliding away from players, making running and tackling that much harder.

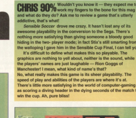
There are a selection of passes to choose from — you can punt the ball long, play a short pass or a delicate chip. To begin with, it's difficult to get a free-flowing move going, but a little practice makes for fast and furious gameplay. The players quickly respond to your instructions; changing direction smoothly, shooting promptly and tackling viciously.

However, anything late or dangerous is swiftly punished by the referee, with yellow and red cards produced for even the most innocuous offences.

There're a medley of trophies to go for, and any number of players can participate in the leagues, the computer controlling the rest of the teams. At club level these include a European Super League, the EUFA Cup ▶

(Above) Select every aspect of the game from this comprehensive menu.
(Left) Sad Things Vs Dull Things... Hmm!
Not exactly Premier League stuff in the special Custom Teams option.

Soccer

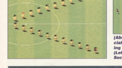


CHRIS 90% Wouldn't you know it — they expect me to work my fingers to the bone for this mag and what do they do? Ask me to review a game that's utterly addictive, that's what!

Sensible Soccer drove me crazy. It hasn't lost any of its awesome playability in the conversion to the Sega. There's nothing more satisfying than giving someone a bloody good hiding in the two- player mode; in fact Stix's still smarting from the walloping I gave him in the Sensible Cup Final, I can tell you!

It's difficult to define what makes this so playable. The graphics are nothing to yell about, neither is the sound, while the players' names are just laughable — Rion Goggs of Manchester! I mean, what kind of name's that?

No, what really makes this game is its sheer playability. The speed of play and abilities of the players are where it's at. There's little more satisfying in the world of computer-gaming as scoring a diving header in the dying seconds of the match to win the cup. Ah, pure bliss!



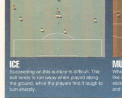


(Above) It may not look special but the action's fast-moving and furious.
(Left) The famous Sensible Soccer Red Arrows impression.

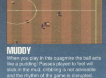
HALF TIME

It's a game of two halfs, that takes a full 90 minutes, and at the end of the day, football's the winner!

PITCH TYPES



ICE
Succeeding on this surface is difficult. The ball tends to run away when played along the ground, while the players find it tough to turn sharply.



MUDDY
When you play in this quagmire the ball acts like a pudding! Passes played to feet will stick in the mud, dribbling is not advisable and the rhythm of the game is disrupted.

WET
Always the best surface for reckless tackles and sliding about on your backside. Pass accurately otherwis iit'll quickly run away from players on the slippery surface.

SOFT
Plenty of give in the surface, so a long stud is always required! An ideal passing surface for teams that play like Glen Hoddle's Chelsea — skilfully to feet.



DRY
A hard pitch which will jars the bones in the tackle. Watch out for the high bounce. Use it wisely to deceive the keeper and stick one in the onion bag!



HARD
Similar to a dry pitch, ideal for dribbling with the ball at speed. This is also a pitch for crisp, first- time passes. Give and go, play the triangles but watch out for those grazed knees!



▶ and the prestigious Sensible Cup; while the World Cup, a league format and knockout cup are open to international teams. In cup competitions, play over one or two legs and select extra-time or penalties in the event of a draw after 90 minutes.

Sensible Soccer's the total football experience available at the moment. It's had even neutrals in the SEGA FORCE MEGA capacity crowd sweating on the edge of their seats (at least that's what Marc claims is the cause of the damp patch on his chair!). We suspect you'll be over the moon about this one, but at the end of the day the ratings are all that count! ■

The English and German teams rush onto the pitch for the crunch World Cup qualifier...

The ball's with England's goalie...

STIX 92% *Sensible Soccer's* been acclaimed as the number one football-simulation on other machines. With the advent of the Sega version, it looks like we can expect the same with our beloved console. If you've ever played another version there's little new here, but then again why bother changing something as brilliant as this?

Sensible Soccer's so addictive, I couldn't stop myself from playing it again and again. It came to the point when the rest of the SEGA FORCE MEGA gang had to physically separate me from the machine to get a go.

As you may've guessed, I'm a big fan of football-sims anyway, which probably goes for most of us here. However, I wouldn't say that's clouded my judgement too much. This is one heck of an addictive game; I urge anyone with even the remotest interest in footy to rush out and buy it.



It's a great individual effort by Gescoigne!



Yet more soccer action!

He punts it long...

Here's an exciting throw-in!

The skirmish breaks England's way...

Use the replay to relive those magic moments.



Phew, what a scorcher! If only Graham Taylor's England could emulate this.



Sensible Soccer

Sony
£39.99

Score	Category
70	Graphics
71	Sound
94	Playability
93	Lastability

91

A game from the Premier League. Totally addictive!

Sports ☎ 071 734 5151


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Aladdin

Aladdin just can't seem to stay out of trouble, but he's the only one who can save the day when Princess Jasmin's kidnapped by the evil Jafar. Aladdin has to curb his wild and reckless ways if he's to succeed in this fast-paced platform adventure.

To save his beloved Jasmine Aladdin fights through a host of action-packed levels.

Aladdin Sane

Aladdin begins life down among the street rats on Agrabah Street. He crosses hot coals and avoids sword-swinging guards to progress. Later levels include the Desert, the Sultan's Dungeon and the Cave Of Wonders.

To protect himself, Aladdin carries his trusty scimitar and can also throw apples he collects as he moves through each stage. These prove effective against enemies lurking just out of sword range and in countering tough, end-of-level bosses.



The Bargain Bazaar has a lot of bonuses on offer!

To help his quest, collect a host of different bonus items dotted around each level. These take in Genie hearts to increase Aladdin's health, Snake Charmer's flutes for conjuring up magic ropes to help you escape to higher buildings, and Aladdin faces, giving you extra lives.

Most of the terrain and buildings are used in some manner — if you appear to be stuck, there's always something to jump, swing or slide to safety on. If Aladdin leaps onto flag poles, he does a huge somersault to reach distant platforms. Washing lines can be used to slide down and palm trees can be jumped on for a limited time, before falling back onto the ground.

Assisting Aladdin along the way is his friendly Genie. You know you're going in the right direction if the Genie keeps popping up.

He gives Aladdin magic lanterns that destroy every baddie on screen — and he grants wishes if you've been really successful in the game. Don't expect, though, to receive

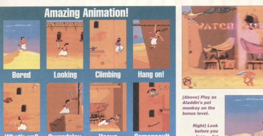




Aladdin passes his Indian rope-climbing lesson with flying colours!

SEGA FORCE MEGA Recommended

Disney studios did the animation, Virgin reaped the rewards. Now you can see what all the fuss is about. *Aladdin*, based on the classic Arabian adventure, comes to the Mega Drive in a blaze of glorious technicolor.



(Above) Play as Aladdin's pet monkey on the bonus level.

Right) Look before you leap — fat boy ahead!

any wishes without paying for them on later levels. You do this when you meet the peddler — find him and open his stall to do business. If you've collected enough gems, spend them on wishes or extra lives. At ten gems and five gems respectively, they don't come cheap!

Disney delights

The game's animation and music all originate from the design studios of the Disney empire. ▶



Watch out for that weapon!

The monkey lends a hand.

Aladdin can't bear to look at that know-it-all genie!

Hard luck. This time you lose.

CHRIS 92% What a magical little number! *Aladdin* entrances everybody who plays it. The whole game's brilliantly executed — without any noticeable defects.

The graphics are outstanding. Aladdin looks good, with great movement and quirks. He's also responsive to every button-press, moving swiftly and smoothly through the levels. The backgrounds and terrain are all superbly designed, capturing the Disney atmosphere to great effect.

This ambience is enhanced by the soundtrack from the animated movie and some smart spot-effects. Basically, the whole cart's engaging and cleverly thought-out.

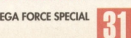
Above all, this is a platform game that actually made me want to play it — no mean feat considering my dislike for so many of this genre. It's immensely addictive, incredibly playable and I loved every second of it. Buy it!

Come and get it!





Ouch, those coals are hot!



It's some of the best designed cartoon animation ever seen on the Mega Drive. Aladdin moves with real grace and has a host of quirky features and movements.

If you leave him standing still too long, he leans on his sword and starts juggling an apple, flicking it across his back and down his neck. Smart stuff indeed, mirrored by the movements of all the other characters. The same goes for the music, which has been lifted from Disney's smash-hit, animated film.

This is definitely one of the top titles to hit the shelves for the Christmas period. It's a big name and a well-designed, tricky, platform cart. *Aladdin's* a clever game and looks certain to be charming everyone who plays it.



I'm not hanging around all day, come and get me!

STIX 96% Oh my giddy Aunt, if this is the quality Disney produces for the Mega Drive, then long may they continue to be involved in Sega carts! Terrific animation, fantastic gameplay and as many other superlatives as you can think of.

I wasn't expecting anything special when I sat down to play this. A few of the others in the office went on about how great it was going to be, but I try to ignore what others spout until I've actually played the game.

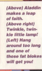
This time, though, they were right. I was mesmerized as soon as the cart slid into my Mega Drive. The only thought in my head from that moment on was to continue playing this until I was pulled away. When that eventually happened, I still slunk back like a crazed addict for more! Nothing else needs to be said, except — check this out. You'd be a fool to miss it!







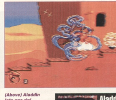


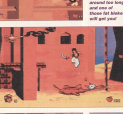


(Above) Aladdin makes a leap of faith. (Above right) Twinkle, twinkle little lamp! (Left) Hang around too long and one of those fat blokes will get you!



Down and out!



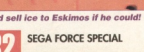


(Above) Aladdin lets one rip! (Left) The new craze of camel-jumping reaches new heights!

Aladdin	
Sega	
£44.99	
96	Graphics
94	Sound
95	Playability
92	Lastability

94 The classic Disney charm's been captured in this brilliant Mega Drive cart.

Platform ☎ 071 373 3000



He'd sell ice to Eskimos if he could!



Don't try this at home kids!

Street Fi

Special Champion Edition

The games phenomenon that spawned a massive industry is here in its latest incarnation. *Street Fighter II*, the most popular arcade game ever, has created comic books, toys and there's even a film in the pipeline. However, the video game's still where it's at, hence the *Special Championship Edition*.

The 12 World Warriors meet once again for their annual championship to decide who's the greatest fighter on the face of the Earth. Chun Li, Ken, Sagat, Blanka and the rest of the gang are all present and correct for the toughest scrap to date on the Mega Drive.

Street Fighter II opens with a smooth and detailed rendition of the opening sequences from the original arcade version. It then launches straight into a host of options to choose from before the action really kicks off.

Fight or die

You can fight in the Champion mode, which splits into three sub-options: the normal one-player scrap, the two-player punch-up or Elimination, in which each player can choose up to six characters. Each match is a one-rounder with the winner taking on the next opponent from the losing team, the final victor being whoever's left standing.

Other options include choosing from a wide ranging number of difficulty levels and deciding on the power of the opponents. This means that in your early tussles, when you're still learning the moves, you can lower your opponent's power to gain more time.

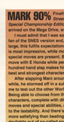
The other choice is the Hyper mode, which allows you to change the speed-setting from no stars to ten stars. At the fastest level this results in some unbelievably furious brawling, with the characters moving 2.5 times faster than in the standard *Champion Edition* mode. Even the bulk of E.Honda moves with the speed of Linford Christie in this high velocity mode!



E. Honda's hundred-hand-slap is a real force to be reckoned with.

ighter II


Ryu launches one of his new infamous fireballs.


MARK 90% Finally, it's here — *Streetfighter II Special Championship Edition* has arrived on the Mega Drive, warts and all!

I must admit that I was something of a fan of the SNES version and, by and large, this fulfils expectations. The speed is most impressive, while most of the special moves are present. Being able to move with E Honda while performing the hundred hand slap makes him one of the best and strongest characters to use!

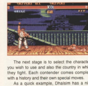
After slapping Marc around for a while, he stormed off in a sulk, leaving me to test out the other World Warriors. Being able to choose from the wealth of characters, complete with different moves and special abilities, adds tenfold to the lastability. And there's nothing more satisfying than beating the living daylights out of so-called experts!

This is easily as strong as the SNES version. Okay, the graphics are slightly less colourful and the backgrounds not quite up to scratch, but it's responsive, swift and darn playable.

Better than *Mortal Kombat*? A matter of taste, personally, I reckon that this whups it!


Confucius he say: 'Head hitting family jewels at high speed causes tears.'


Chun-Li and Dhalsim trade special moves, but who looks more impressive?



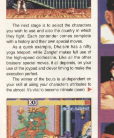
The next stage is to select the characters you wish to use and also the country in which they fight. Each contender comes complete with a history and their own special moves.

As a quick example, Dhalsim has a nifty yoga teleport, while Zangief makes full use of the high-speed clothesline. Like all the other bruisers' special moves, it all depends, on your use of the joypad and clever timing to make the execution perfect.

The winner of the bouts is all-dependent on your skill at using your character's attributes to the utmost. It's vital to become intimate (ooer) ▶


Balrog proves that fancy yoga can't help you against being KO'd!

The World Warriors



The Bonus Rounds



▶ with the warrior's moves and controls to be successful against another experienced performer. Otherwise, it's a quick and bloody ending to the battle!

Nobody likes to get their ass kicked that easily, so there's a sound argument for buying the new six-button pads. Without these you have to use the start button to switch between punching and kicking. This wastes valuable time in a really heated exchange, meaning the difference between glorious victory and agonising defeat.

Then again, who gets that worked up about a beat-'em-up cart (the whole SEGA FORCE MEGA crew quickly look the other way)? ■



STIX 76% Ahhh! The spectre of *Street Fighter* returns once more to haunt me. That may sound harsh, but I've always had an aversion to this game and beat-'em-ups in general. They all tend to encourage a certain member of the SFM crew to start throwing down challenges to all and sundry. Only to skulk off if anyone has had the audacity to give him a bloody good spanking!

It has to be said that the game boasts some excellent graphics and the characters move around the screen smoothly. For this reason alone I've upped my overall grade.

To be honest, though, the game itself displays nothing that I look for in my fave carts. To me the out and out violence is simply pointless, and only serves the baser instincts of those playing.

I also object to the manic pressing of buttons in a frenzied fashion that always accompanies this genre. The problem is, if you haven't got a six-button-pad you're in real trouble. Who wants to fork out around £30, though, just because of a poor control system on one game?

I concede I'm in a minority when you consider the success of this and *Mortal Kombat*, which is why I feel it's necessary to acknowledge its popularity in my rating.

Guess who's had their Readybrek?

(Above) Join the Street Fighters, travel the world and beat up some interesting people.
(Left) Blanka shows us he has an electric personality.



Sagat proves that Jane Fonda workout videos really do improve your flexibility.





Fancy meeting them on a dark night.



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80	Sound
82	Playability
84	Lastability

83

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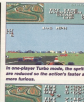
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SEGA FORCE MEGA Recommended

F1

September was a great month for racing game fans because it saw the launch of Domark's *F1*. The game with probably the shortest title of all time but also the slickest graphics, silkiest movement and plenty of hot race track action. Let's burn rubber!



In one-player Turbo mode, the sprites are reduced so the action's faster and more furious.


Pic: Rex Features

If you've lost interest in the Formula One racing scene since our beloved Nigel Mansell bunked off to America, Putney's premier software house may have something to tempt you back. Domark claim that *F1* combines both the silly and serious sides of racing into one cart, offering Arcade, Championship and Training modes.

Arcade's a straightforward race over six laps; it's pedal to the metal until you fail to finish or get through all the tracks.

The Championship's what Murray Walker will be familiar with, only *F1* lets you choose the tracks and the order you tackle them in. Every Championship race starts with a qualifying heat, where you try to put in a fast time for a good place on the starting grid.

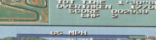
In Training mode, you can test drive any track and, unlike the other games, change the entire car set-up in the pits, rather than just your set of tyres.

Spoilt for choice

Championship and Training modes have a further sub-menu, where you select a one or two-player game. If you choose a one-player race, you've the choice of normal or turbo mode, which increases game speed at the expense of sprite size.

There are four difficulty settings: Novice, Amateur, Professional and Expert. As you work your way up from Novice, the console drivers act more aggressively and crashes inflict greater damage on your car. You find yourself in the pits more often than not if you choose a higher setting without mastering Novice level.

Next you're presented with a piccy of your car. Here you can choose your rear wing setting





The Team Domark car comes with a six-speed gear box and 12-month warranty.



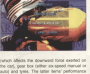


Change the set-up of your car to suit your driving style (ie, no brakes).

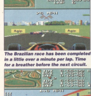
The Brazilian circuit is simple apart from one hairpin bend.



These chunky concrete arches whiz by smoothly and very swiftly; F1's 3D is among the best we've ever seen.







The Brazilian race has been completed in a little over a minute per lap. Time for a breather before the next circuit.

(which affects the downward force exerted on the car), gear box (either six-speed manual or auto) and tyres. The latter items' performance depends on weather conditions, since soft tyres are perfect in hot weather but useless when it's pelting down with rain!

The right formula?

If the joypad settings aren't to your liking, the buttons can be reassigned. When you've got the right set-up, head for the circuit for qualifying laps or the Arcade challenge.

When you're driving, you'll notice how sensitive the controls are; you can't win by sticking down the accelerate button, leaning into corners and hoping for the best.

It's no good hurtling around the tracks and throwing the car around the corners with wild abandon. Mistreat these babies and you'll be making more visits to the ▶

After every race you get Driver and Constructor league tables. The Domark team have fallen into second place.





A split-screen two-player game is fun.





ADE 93% What a blinder! Domark have a sure-fire hit on their hands. I couldn't believe it when other reviewers raved about *Jaguar XJ220* — a turkey if ever I saw one, and that was on CD! *F1* wipes the floor (or Tarmac) with it.

The first thing that hits you is the sheer speed of it all. Is *F1* fast? You bet your helmet it is. In Turbo mode, prepare for edge-of-the-seat, boxer shorts-staining action. You won't find a faster racing game on any Sega machine.

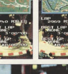
I can't fault the visuals. Both scrolling and perspective are absolutely superb. There's no flicker, no jerkiness… everything is *so* smooth. The cars are well drawn, nicely shaded and move realistically.

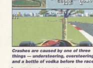
There are simply loads of options: 12 circuits, four skill levels, four kinds of game, different tyres, wings etc. Nothing's been left out. Sound is good, a selection of small theme tunes, engine noise and tyres skidding.

This is the best racing sim I've played on any console. Check out Domark's *F1* — it's *the* racing game of the year.







Crashes are caused by one of three things — understeering, oversteering and a bottle of vodka before the race!

Here we see Paz Prost in his Team Reliant car, passing under the M5 motorway bridge in Wednesbury.

Hey, Mr Prost, have some of this cheap Vin de Pain on your racing suit! What d'ya mean, it's a £90 bottle of Moët?

▶ pits than Ade's relatives! You have to learn to race like the real Formula One drivers if you want a share of the glory.

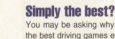
Should you batter your car out of racing condition (and you will!), a message appears, advising you to get to the pits, ASAP. If you ignore it, the tyres only last another lap before they blow and you're out of the race.

Simply the best?

You may be asking why this is billed as one of the best driving games ever. Perhaps it's something to do with the game's design and amount of user-friendly options included.

The battery back-up facility not only saves high scores and championship tallies, it also remembers your car set-up. In all races, be they Training, qualifying, Arcade or Championship, you can quit at any time, see the result of the last race and enter the next. So if you're miles behind at Monza but first in the Constructors' and Drivers' tables, you won't lose your placing.

Racing sims have come a long way since the first roar of *Pole Position*. Perhaps *F1* has taken MD racing to its limits... ■



Palm trees adorn Monaco's roadsides, but there's no time to grab a few coconuts, you've a race to win.

TIM 90% After the unimpressive *Jaguar XJ220* CD, I'm a bit wary of racing sims, especially those that claim to be the best on the market. I was ready to give this cart a slaying but my talons weren't needed.

Graphically, *F1*'s brilliant. The cars move smoothly at ultra-high speeds and scenery's detailed and well drawn. The sound's pretty impressive, too — tunes are catchy and the roar of the engine's fairly realistic.

The gameplay's fast and addictive. At last there's a racing sim where the high speeds seem real — in many games, you only know you're going fast because that's what the speedo tells you.

My only gripe is with the feeble crash effects. When you crash into a sharp deviation sign, you fly through the air, but crash into a flimsy tree at 150 mph and there's just a faint knocking sound.

F1 is the best racing sim I've played. Cool graphics, aggressive sound and compulsive gameplay make Domark's cart a must.

San Marino is perhaps the most glamourous location for a Grand Prix. She's also a bar owner in Eldorado.

The long straights are the ideal places to overtake. Use the slipstream technique for an extra burst of speed.

PAUL 92% I've seen countless racing games in my time but few have caught my attention. Many promised to be the most realistic driving sim ever… but gameplay was a matter of holding down the accelerator and turning the corners.

All that's changed because *F1*'s roared onto the scene to wipe the floor with the competition. The graphics and sound are superb, making the races enjoyable to watch and play, especially the two-player split-screen and turbo modes.

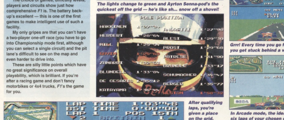
The choice of games, difficulty levels, players and circuits show just how comprehensive *F1* is. The battery back-up's excellent — this is one of the first games to make intelligent use of such a facility.

My only gripes are that you can't have a two-player one-off race (you have to go into Championship mode first, although you can select a single circuit) and the pit lane's difficult to see on the map and even harder to drive into.

These are silly little points which have no great significance on overall playability, which is brilliant. If you're after a racing game and don't fancy motorbikes or 4x4 trucks, *F1*'s the game for you.

The lights change to green and Ayrton Senna-pod's the quickest off the grid — he's like sh… snow off a shovel!

Grrr! Every time you go for a lap record you get stuck behind a woman driver.



After qualifying laps, you're given a place on the grid.

In Arcade mode, the idea's to win after six laps of your chosen circuit.



F1

Domark
£44.99

90	Graphics
82	Sound
85	Playability
94	Lastability

92

Smooth, exciting and *very* fast — the best racing game available. Buy it!

Racing simulation ☎ 081 780 2222

Snow B

SEGA FORCE MEGA Recommended

Instead of searching for snow to build yourself a snow man, how about making do with this hot arcade conversion from the guys and gals at Tengen? It's got some impressive Japanese visuals to show off and bags of excellent playability!

Life's a blast when you're a snowperson (no sexism in the SEGA FORCE MEGA office) — just look at Nick and Tom, the Snow Brothers. They spend all day chatting up gorgeous princesses and listening to sub-standard rap records. Or rather they *did*, until *The Informer* finally left the Top Ten and, more importantly, the two princesses were imprisoned by the wicked Fire Queen.

She was jealous of their beauty and the fact that their Ice Castle was ten times bigger than hers and had an AA rating, so she zapped them with a spell and took them to her lair.

This miffed the brothers: she'd taken the best-looking birds in the area (see — no sexism!). Worse, she's threatening to kill them unless their father hands over his kingdom.

Luckily, Nick and Tom aren't your average yellow-bellied snowmen and set out for Fire Castle to rescue them — after all, saving damsels usually guarantees you a knighthood!

You take control of Nick in a one-player game or both brothers if you've convinced a mate to play. Your mission's to battle through the castle's floors, defeating the Fire Queen's evil monsters until you come face to face with the woman herself.

Don't think of that last battle just yet. Every level's choc-full of devious beasties and devilishly laid-out platforms. You need to be at your platform peak to survive the terrors which await.

The action's a curious hybrid of *Bubble Bobble*, *Dig Dug* and *Rainbow Islands*, only you

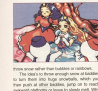


What a cheeky grin. With a smile like that, who could resist helping him find the two kidnapped princesses?



Brothers


It could be curtains for old Nick, while Tom makes a sharp exit... stage right.

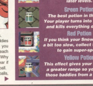


throw snow rather than bubbles or rainbows.

The idea's to throw enough snow at baddies to turn them into huge snowballs, which you then push at other baddies, jump on to reach awkward platforms or leave to slowly melt. Why would you do that? Various bonuses appear if you kill two or more baddies with one snowball.

There's speed-up, long-range snowballs, high-power snowballs and the ultimate ▶

Come on, do the loco-potion with me!



Blue Potion
Collect this for increased snowball power. Handy for the later levels.

Green Potion
The best potion in the game! Your player turns into Mr Blobby and kills everything onscreen.

Red Potion
If you think your Snow Brother's a bit too slow, collect this potion to gain super-speed.

Yellow Potion
This effect gives your snowballs a greater range so you can hit those baddies from a distance.




Urgh! What an ugly git. He's the first guardian you meet. Although he looks mean, he's not that hard to defeat.

These red guys are easy to kill — just watch out for their roll attack.




Level 30 sees you battling two oversized chickens intent on stopping your search for the girls.




The layout of each screen presents its own problems. Here the steep slopes give our hero a spot of bother.

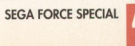
PAUL 90% Yeah! Cool! Brilliant! Smart (quick someone, get the bath-chair)! One of the best arcade games has been converted to the MD and I'm well chuffed.

Snow Brothers is just sooo cool — the graphics are groovy, the sound's funky and gameplay's simply out of this world. If it's a *Bubble Bobble*-type game you're after (ie, static screen, loads of baddies and oodles of fun), you can forget anything that's gone in the past — this is the game by which all others are judged.

It's totally addictive. Once you've picked it up, you can't put it down. It's lucky there's a password system otherwise I'd be up all night trying to complete it!

Games like these are few and far between: *Bubble Bobble* has never surfaced on MD, neither has *Dig Dug*, while *Rainbow Islands* can only be found on Japanese import. Hopefully, *Snow Brothers* will find its way onto a British cart.

If you can't wait (I know I couldn't), I suggest you get a Japanese convertor and rush out to buy this game now, especially if you're after a two-player game.









weapon, Mr Blobby (you glide all over the screen, killing anything you touch). Bonuses are awarded for killing all baddies with a single blockbusting snowball.

One in ten...

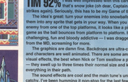
But be warned, these powers disappear when you lose a life. Things get very tricky on the later levels when you return to normal speed and bog-standard snowballs.

It's not as if you've many lives to waste. You start with between one and four lives, depending on what's set on the options screen, and lose a life whenever you touch a baddy. Lose all your lives and you can use one of four continues.

Thankfully, a password's given at the end of every tenth level, just after you've fought a guardian. Sorry, did we forget to mention that you face huge beasties?

Once you've sussed out the gameplay, try altering the difficulty level (we suggest the Hard setting only if you're drunk).

Remember to stay cool — heat is definitely not neat when you're a snowman!



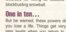
TIM 92% I was well impressed with this cart, and that's snow joke (oh dear, Captain Cliché strikes again). Seriously, this has to be my Game of the Month.

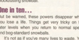
The idea's great: turn your enemies into snowballs and roll them into any sprite that gets in your way. When you roll your enemy from one of the top platforms, it looks like a pinball game as the ball bounces from platform to platform. It's challenging, fun and bloody addictive — I was dragged away from the MD, screaming for more.

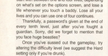
The graphics are damn fine. Backdrops are ultra-colourful and characters are well animated. There are some amusing visual effects, the best when Nick or Tom swallow a power-up — they swell up to three times their normal size and kill everything in their path.

The sound effects are cool and the main tune's unbelievably catchy. I've been humming it non-stop for the last few hours and it's driving me mad (gibber, gibber).

Snow Brothers is the most compulsive game I've played this month. Absolutely fabulous.









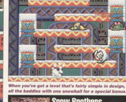




This screen's very tricky. Those red devils can curl themselves into a ball and attack at high speed.



That Sumo's a real pain in the arse! Killing him's difficult so avoid his stars.



When you've got a level that's fairly simple in design, kill all the baddies with one snowball for a special bonus.



After dating snowmen for six months, the girls decided to kidnap themselves!



Yeah! It's the new superhero of the Nineties, Mr Blobby. Cool or what?



Snow Brothers

Tengen
£39.99

85	Graphics
82	Sound
94	Playability
90	Lastability

91

A fantastic platform romp that'll go down a storm with all the family. Buy it!

Arcade/import — A.C.E 071 439 1185



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Madden'94



As one EA sports-simulation fades from memory, so another inevitably rears its high profile head. This time it's *John Madden's* latest incarnation blazing a trail on our Mega Drives.

We've had *NHL Hockey '94*, so it was only a matter of time before we got Madden's yearly release. Well, here it is, complete with all the style and glitz you expect from American Football in general, and EA sims in particular.

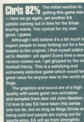
Some might say we've had enough of the burly head coach and his football-carts. They may point to the fact that each year only the minutest cosmetic changes are made to the look of the game, without ever affecting the gameplay. To an extent this is true, but the games still sell like hot cakes which seems to confirm there are a lot of fans out there.

Hey, hey, hey...

The control system's the same as always. Click on play icons in boxes at the top and bottom of the screen to select your players' moves and your strategy.

It's the same for offence and defence. In attack you can elect to pass, rush or kick depending on the state of play and skills of your team. Defending's a matter of selecting what type of play you expect your opponent to use and reacting accordingly by choosing from

Scoring the point after a TD is child's play. Even our tips boy managed it once.



Chris 82% The initial reaction to getting this game was — here we go again, yet another EA update coming out in time for the Xmas buying-mania. Too cynical for my own good, I guess.

Although I still believe it's a bit much to expect people to keep forking out for a few tweaks to the original, I find myself addicted to *Madden* yet again! Every time a new version comes out, I get gripped by the old football frenzy. This is a satisfying and extremely addictive game which would be great value for anyone new to the world of Sega.

The graphics and sound are of a high quality with some great new animation and samples from dear old John Madden. I'd love to say EA have taken this series one too far, but as long as Mega Drives are being sold and people are crying out for sports-sims, EA will go from strengtho strength!

pass defence, rush defence or anticipating a kick, usually on fourth-down.

This is always the system used in EA football-simulations, basically because it's pointless changing a winning formula. This system's easy to understand and easy to implement.

You can choose to compete in the new play-offs, all-time play-offs and exhibition matches as always. However, now there are also Franchise play-offs. These allow you to pit what are considered to be the best players ever in each team against each other.



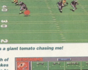
Heck of a play!

The cart boasts a number of new features. There is new speech before, during and after the match. The commentary now includes gems such as 'Gotta watch the snap!' One bonus in this version is the option to turn the Maddenisms off when you get tired of them.

There's also, of course, plenty of new animation — particularly evident in the tackle, where there are shuddering wipe-outs to enjoy. The celebrations after a touch-down have been upgraded as well.

Other features that quickly become noticeable include the extra movement in the lineout and the clearer definition of the players' movements.

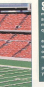
As you'll have noticed by now, the changes are all cosmetic, but that does little to dampen enthusiasm for this cart. The *Madden* series has always been addictive, which is why EA keep churning them out and we keep buying them! ■



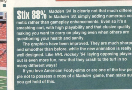
Help! There's a giant tomato chasing me!



A wealth of plays and fakes are available to any would-be John Maddens on the tried and tested options menu.



Stix falls flat on his back, unaware of the rules of American Footy, fairplay or sportsmanship.

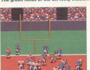


Stix 88% *Madden '94* is clearly not that much different to *Madden '93*, simply adding numerous cosmetic rather than gameplay enhancements. Even so it's a smashing cart, with high playability and that elusive quality making you want to carry on playing even when others are questioning your health and sanity.

The graphics have been improved. They are much sharper and smoother than before, while the new animation is really well designed. Like *NHL Hockey '94* laying opposing players out is even more fun, now that they crash to the turf in so many different ways!

If you love American Footy-sims or are one of the few people not to possess a copy of a *Madden* game, then make sure you get hold of this.

The green fields of the EA footy stadium streches for at least, oh, 100 yards.



They stood watching Norm spasm...



'Now, how much do I owe you?'



John Madden '94

EA

£44.99

Score	Category
84	Graphics
88	Sound
89	Playability
85	Lastability

85

The American Football-sim that can't be beaten. Still the ruler of the roost!

Sports

☎ 0753 549442



Zool

Is he an alien? Is he a ninja ant? What the flippin' heck is he? Well whatever he is, he's become a huge star with Zool merchandising ready to hit the shops in 1994. Check out the Mega Drive version of this marvel!

This is the game packing more gratuitous plugs for its sponsor, Chuppa Chups, into the action than's commercially decent! You know what Chupa Chups are don't you? A sweetie manufacturer making scrumptious lollypops if you must know!

Anyway, about the game. *Zool* begins with our hero innocently flying across the galaxy in his spaceship. Unfortunately, his tranquillity's shattered when a huge rip appears in the fabric of the universe. He's sucked into a black hole and ends up crash-ing on a bizarre planet in, yep you've guessed it, the Nth Dimension!

Once Zool's witnessed this strange land's unusual terrain, he realises his plight isn't accidental. Rather it's the work of his evil nemesis, Krool (how long did it take to come up with that one guys?).

It's at this stage you take control of the latest cool, central character off the conveyor belt and battle to survive the planet's treacherous levels, finally meeting Krool in a deadly showdown.

Zool's a massive platform game placing you in control of a feisty little ninja warrior. The style and game scenario are very much in *Sonic the Hedgehog* mode — a vast number of stages, each consisting of four levels, at the end of which there's a big boss to defeat.

Like any hyperactive insect, Zool soon gets browned off with inactivity.

He soars through the air at the greatest of speeds. Watch out for the flypaper!

'Toys R' out to get Us! (Yet another sad attempt at humour fails.)

Zool sets out on his quest, but comes up against deadly confectionery.





Bug you like

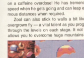
Zool looks and acts like a hyperactive insect on a caffeine overdose! He has tremendous speed when he gets going and can leap enormous distances when required.

Zool can also stick to walls a bit like an overgrown fly — a vital talent as you progress through the levels on each stage. It not only allows you to overcome huge mountains that couldn't possibly be cleared in a single bound, but also lets you rest on a cliff-side and check out what you're up against next. A real bonus in a game as frenetic as this.

To protect himself, Zool carries a laser gun that fires loads of little bubbles. You also turn him into a deadly spinning-top during a jump by pressing the [C] button. In this mode, he'll kill any of the smaller enemies he meets.

However, it takes a lot more firepower than this to take out the big bosses guarding the end of every level. These guys act tough, play dirty and take no prisoners — even the giant wasp at the end of stage one's no mug!

There are numerous bonuses lying about in each world, extra lives, small hearts to power up your energy levels and shields giving Zool temporary invulnerability.



Zool balances on the edge. Hmm... of course, this isn't influenced by Sonic.

There's also a kooky little bonus called the Twozool. This creates a Zool-clone, mirroring all your moves. The biggest advantage of having your buddy in tow's that you fire twice as many bullets as normal. This definitely comes in handy on later stages.

Zool's a game hopping to corner the *Sonic* end of the Sega market. The question is, can any new character, however rough and tough, hope to compete with a living legend? ■

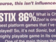
STIX 86%

What is Chris on? *Zool* is one of the best platform games that I've ever played! So, it's not *Sonic*, but it's still a highly playable game in its own right.

One of the main things that struck me about *Zool* is the variety: each and every level contains bundles of different enemies, all particular to that individual world, while the traps are pretty unique too. Take Music World, for example — not only are there CDs and the like to collect, but the speakers emit notes which you can float up on.

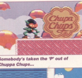
Graphically, *Zool* is superb, with great attention to detail and a pretty cool main sprite. Most of the Amiga content has been superbly ported across by EA — cigars all round, if you ask me!

Zool is different to Sonic as a character too, being far tougher and a whole lot smarter. He has more moves and he's better looking too! If you want platforming action then you want *Zool*!



Somebody's taken the 'P' out of Chuppa Chups...





The big guns are after Zool on the Toy Level.

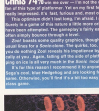
CHRIS 74%

It was always going to be tough for *Zool* to win me over — I'm not the world's biggest fan of this type of platformer. Yet on my first few goes, I was really impressed. It's fast, furious and, most of all, fun.

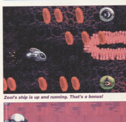
This optimism didn't last long, I'm afraid. I soon got fed up. Surely in a game of this nature a little more originality could have been attempted. The gameplay's fairly easy and you can often simply bounce through a level.

Zool boasts some quality graphics, though along the usual lines for a *Sonic*-clone. The quirks, too, are similar — if you do nothing Zool reveals his impatience by looking quizzically at you. Again, falling off the side of platforms or slipping on ice is all very much in the *Sonic* mould.

It's for this reason I recommend it to anyone who loves Sega's cool, blue Hedgehog and are looking for more of the same. Otherwise, you'll find it's a bit too easy to be a top-class game.



Zool's ship is up and running. That's a bonus!



Zool's got the skids, but they won't stop him sliding down this hill. Perhaps a well-wedged cork will!



Zool

EA

£44.99

Score	Category
83	Graphics
71	Sound
80	Playability
79	Lastability

80

Zool'll please fans of Sonic the Hedgehog but isn't really in the same class.

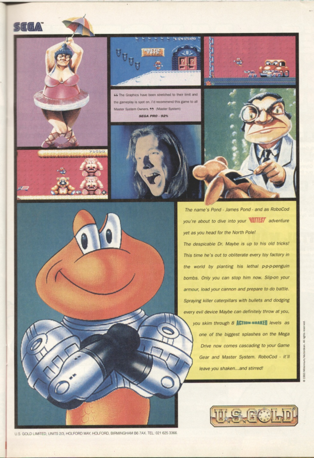
Platform

☎ 0753 549442



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Exclusive review of The Jungle Book from Virgin!
PLUS! Sonic Chaos reviewed!, a peek at Winter Olympics, Mortal Kombat, Robocod, Cool Spot and all the top Game Gear games get reviewed and rated!


SEGA
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SEGA PRO - 92%
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SEGA FORCE SPECIAL

CHILLY SPORTS

55 US Gold are all set for the number one Master System game race this Christmas with their sports simulation of the Winter Olympics in Lillehammer 1994. Check out our frosty preview.

GET CHAOTIC!

56 Ahh, it's that lovable blue ferret, or is he a badger? Or an otter? Well what ever he is we've got a review of his latest Master System adventure *Sonic Chaos*!

MORTAL MAD!

58 They said it could never been done on the humble Master System but the dudes at Acclaim proved everyone wrong with this excellent conversion of the *Mortal Kombat arcade game.*

We even know the cheat to give you lots of blood and gore in the game! All you have to do is press [2], [1], [2], DOWN and UP on the code screen at the start of the game and the blood and guts will start to flow. Sick but arcade perfect!



RUMBLES IN THE JUNGLE

60 The Jungle Book is looking like a fantastic game for Christmas and Disney have got the video out too! Cor, you'd better get out your dancing shoes and become the king of the swinger zoo!



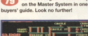


HANDHELD HELP

78 Here's the guide to beat all guides on the Sega Game Gear. Just check out all those carts here before spending your money and you won't be disappointed.

THE MARKET

79 All the best games ever to appear on the Master System in one handy buyers' guide. Look no further!

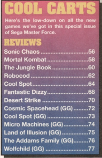


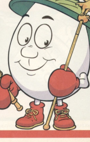
COOL CARTS

Here's the low-down on all the new games we've got in this special issue of Sega Master Force.

REVIEWS

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U.S. GOLD

WINTER OLYMPICS

With the snowy weather already upon us it's time to start those chilly sporting events and get a numb bum — from watching all those suckers do it on TV! Well know you can take part too, Without even stepping outside!

To coincide with the event of events in 1994, the Winter Olympics held in Lillehammer this coming February, US Gold are about to release a Winter Olympics game full of the competitive spirit of the real Olympic events.

You can part in ten different sports, each need lots of skill and good judgement in order to complete them. Experience the speed and down right frightening Bobsleigh event as you zip around tight bends at high speeds, or try your hand at a spot of Down Hill ski racing which needs lots of concentration in order to avoid the trees and other obstacles.

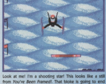
The other events are all familiar to anyone who has watched Ski Sunday in the past. Such joys as the Giant Slalom, the Luge and freestyle skiing.

All events feature realistic graphics that show off the Master System's capabilities well, to add to the realism your character is in the foreground making it easier to control yourself around the courses. To add to the Olympic spirit there are a choice of eight languages to suit nearly everybody.

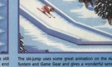
As you start the first event, there'll be an opening ceremony to give the ultimate experience of the Winter Olympic games. To get you used to each event, there's also an option to enter the practice mode to brush up on each event until you're ready to tackle the real thing against other skilled competitors. Winter Olympics will be released suitably for Christmas and is sure to be a smash with all sports fans.



Hut, hut, hut! Come on, keep that stamina going, there only another five miles before you can stop and have a breather!



Look at me! I'm a shooting star! This looks like a still from *You've Been Framed!*. That bloke is going to end up with his head stuck in the snow!



The ski-jump uses some great animation on the Master System and Game Gear and gives a wonderful sense of speed as your skier races down the slope.



Oh I wouldn't go out in the cold if I was this skier. I'd want to stay inside that little hut, all nice and cosy with a big cup of hot chocolate!



Winter Olympics is packed with all the great events from the winter sporting event of the decade! You can practice them all first then take the plunge and go for a world championship.

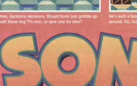


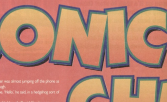


Hmm, decisions decisions. Should Sonic just gobble up both these ring TVs now, or save one for later?



He's such a busy beaver our Sonic, always rushing around. No, hold on... he's not a beaver at all!





The blue hedgehog with a pile of speeding tickets arrived back on the Master System and Game Gear in November with a spanking new adventure. The added attraction this time was that you could play his sidekick Tails!

It was a peaceful day on **Sonic**'s South Island. Along with his faithful sidekick, **Tails**, he was busy exploring, zipping along the planes and whizzing around the loop-the-loops.

Suddenly, they skidded to a halt. Was that a phone they could hear ringing? It certainly was. In a nearby call box, the receiver was almost jumping off the phone as an urgent message came through.

Sonic picked up the phone. 'Hello,' he said, in a hedgehog sort of way.

The reply came in one garbled breath: 'Sonic! You have to come quickly. That nasty-smelling **Eggman** has found the red Chaos Emerald and is planning to make a nuclear weapon out of it!'

It was one of Sonic's look-outs. Sure enough, as Sonic was taking in what he'd heard, the whole island started to sink under his feet. He had to act *fast*.

A life on the ocean wave!

You see, the South Island which is home to Sonic and Tails needs the magical Chaos Emeralds to survive. They're the source of vitality for life on the island and without all six, its balance is disrupted and it sinks into the ocean.

Sonic discovered that Eggman had scattered the five remaining Emeralds throughout a parallel world. What could he do to restore peace and tranquillity to South Island? Call International Rescue? Write to *Jim'll Fix It*?

Nope. He was going to have to face this one himself — with a little help from Miles 'Tails' Prower, of course!





Do foxes ever wear trainers? Tails doesn't really like the idea of them, they'd make his feet sweat.



Either Sonic is stuck fast under that platform or he's going to do something special with that power-up.

Some levels have secret blocks that can be blasted away with a good spin jump, they usually hide bonuses too.



Spikes or tails?

So which is the best character to choose? *Sonic Chaos* gives Master System players the choice of Sonic or Tails and their different strengths and weaknesses. Here's the SEGA MASTER FORCE guide to the Pet Shop Boys of the video games world!

Sonic the Hedgehog

Sonic can use a pogo stick, allowing him to jump really high, and rocket shoes add to his speed. After collecting a hundred rings, Sonic enters a bonus stage to win back one of the Chaos Emeralds from the parallel world.

Once all six zones have been cleared and all six Emeralds collected, Sonic witnesses the extra-special end sequence. Tails, on the other hand, will have to buy the video!

Choosing Sonic puts the game into Normal mode.

Miles 'Tails' Prower

This sly old fox has two tails! He can use them to fly or swim at high speeds. Unfortunately, he can't use the pogo stick or rocket shoes because he's scared of heights and doesn't like going too fast.

Tails can't enter any of the bonus stages to collect Chaos Emeralds, even after collecting a hundred rings, so he can't complete the game properly and see the end sequence.

Choosing Tails puts *Sonic Chaos* into Easy mode.

Nick

I was well impressed with this new Sonic extravaganza. Right from the moment you plug the cartridge into the Master System and switch on, you're treated to the slickness and quality we've come to expect from Sega. Of course, this game has one up on the other MS Sonic games as you can now play Tails, as well as our blue hero.

Visually, *Sonic Chaos* is stunning. Backgrounds, sprites and animation are all top-notch. I was particularly impressed by the new gadgets Sonic's been given to help in his quest. The rocket shoes and pogo stick will have you playing till the cows come home!

Sonic Chaos is a fantastic game that no Master System owner should be without. Check it out now or forever regret it!

Forget the rings, it looks like Tails is only interested in reaching the end of the zone in one piece!

It's worth exploring every little nook and cranny of the Sonic games, there's always something hiding away.

The red plungers are useful for reaching higher platforms but when there're lots of them it's a real headache!

MF Rating

Sonic Chaos

Score	Category
94	Graphics
93	Sound
90	Playability
89	Lastability

93

Simply an essential purchase for anyone with a Master System or Game Gear — nuff said!

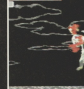
Sega
£29.99

Platform
☎ 071 373 3000



The most controversial beat-'em-up of all time is here! If you read our preview last month, you should be gagging to know what we think of the finished cart. Go ahead and have a bloody good read!





Mortal Kombat, from Acclaim, features all the action of the original Midway arcade game. There are six kombateers to choose from, each with their own special moves and abilities.

MORTAL

Once again, the time's come for the world's greatest warriors to gather and enter into battle. The Shaolin Tournament's the place where combatants challenge each other to become Grand Champion. It is a competition of honour and glory where only the toughest survive.

However, several hundred years ago, the evil wizard Shang Tsung entered the tournament and turned it into a killing ground. The ancient warrior's cursed by the gods and must steal defeated opponents' souls to stay alive. In this way, Shang Tsung's reign of terror has lasted for over *500 years*.

Killing one of the judges, Shang Tsung elected himself head of the tournament and it became a corrupt supply for his soul energy. He summoned a half human, half dragon creature, Goro, from another dimension and used his hired muscle to consolidate his position.

With Goro as Grand Champion, the ancient wizard ensured his reign of terror. Until now...

Meet the warriors

Welcome to the ultra-violent world of *Mortal Kombat*! Based on Midway's hit arcade game from last year, you take the role of one of six world warriors: Liu Kang, Johnny Cage, Sonya Blade, Scorpion, Sub-Zero or Rayden. All characters have their own style of fighting and a range of basic moves such as punches, kicks and jumps, plus unique special moves to learn.

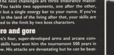
Mortal Kombat's played in one of two ways. In one-player mode, select a fighter and you're presented with a battle plan, showing in which order you'll tackle opponents. You first fight the other five characters in separate bouts, then a dark duplicate of yourself — a mirror match.

Go on, sniff that! Sonya Blade maims yet another victim with her lethal odour eaters.

The next challenges are three endurance matches. You tackle two opponents, one after the other, with but a single energy bar to your name. If you're still in the land of the living after that, your skills are tested to the limit by two boss characters.

Goro and gore

Goro's four, super-developed arms and arcane combat skills have won him the tournament 500 years in a row. His attacks are devastating but he *can* be beaten.



Raiden performs some much needed dental work on poor old Scorpion.







Raiden proves that Scorpion's a real pushover when it comes to playing *Mortal Kombat*.

A powerful uppercut sends Liu Kang reeling. Follow up with the spear and take loads of energy off.

KOMBAT

The final hurdle is Shang Tsung himself. He has many powerful abilities, including super-speed, multiple fireballs and shape-shifting, which he uses to become any other character — including all their abilities!

The second way to play *Mortal Kombat* is in Vs mode. Two players select any fighter and battle to a standstill. Win rounds by knocking your enemy's power bar to zero or taking the least damage within the time limit.

The loser's given the option to continue. If they don't, the computer starts a one-player game, but a human opponent may join in at any time by pressing button [1].

One-player mode offers three difficulty settings and six continues — many players should be able to complete it using only a few. As for the gore... Yes, there's plenty of blood and all the death moves, but you have to enter a code to access them.

For fans of all-out fighting games, *Mortal Kombat* is the most violent and bloody cart on the MS. Prepare yourself for *Kombat*!

Goro isn't the tough nut that everyone makes him out to be. Keep your distance and use special attacks.

Mat grins... 'BLOODY GREAT!'

It had to happen, I guess. With Acclaim's *Mortal Kombat* springing up on every major format this autumn, it's only fair that the Master System should get a look-in. This is one of the most incredible games ever released for an 8-bit system. The characters are massive and superbly digitised (forget *Pit Fighter*, this is the real deal!).

Kano's excluded due to memory restrictions but the six remaining fighters have all their moves and well impressive they are, too. With the help of great sound effects, punches and kicks really connect and death moves are here in full glory, once you've entered the gore code.

Two-player mode gives *Mortal Kombat* high lastability because you and whoever faces you can master all six characters or specialise on a particular favourite (mine's Johnny Cage). In one-player mode, three difficulty levels mean novices and experts alike will have a real challenge on their hands.

If you've seen poor MS games in the past, prepare yourself: *Mortal Kombat* will totally blow you away with its stunning graphics and arcade feel. This proves, once again, that the MS is capable of handling great titles.

Acclaim have produced yet another top game —beat-'em-up fans will drool over this for months. Buy it! **MAT 94%**

Unlike other versions of the game, *Mortal Kombat* on the MS only features two fighting locations.

Paul confesses... 'I WENT ALL TINGLY!'

No matter what your parents and teachers say about console games turning innocent gamesplayers into a cross between Saddam Hussein and Rambo, the blood, sweat, playability and, er... more blood of a classic fighting game lasts for ages. So when I heard about *Mortal Kombat*, I went all tingly and had a sudden urge to slap someone about.

Unlike many beat-'em-ups, *Mortal Kombat*'s great to get into and there's plenty of opportunity to improve your skills. There are loads of hard fighters to choose from, each with wondrous special moves to send opponents flying across the screen. These moves are the only tricky things in *Mortal Kombat*, but when you've got them sussed you can spring into action.

Mat's expounded the joys of two-player mode but I love the single-player option. The 'two for the price of one power bar' endurance matches are very tough and increase lastability.

As far as graphics go, this cart really shows what the Master System can do, with colourful, detailed figures and moody backdrops. For cool fighting action, check out *Mortal Kombat*.

PAUL 87%

MF Rating

Mortal Kombat

Score	Category
92	Graphics
86	Sound
89	Playability
90	Lastability

A great fighting game which perfectly captures the feel of the classic coin-op

92

Acclaim
£34.99

Out: September
☎ 0962 877788

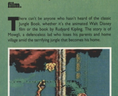
In the water level Mowgli can float down river on Baloo the bear's fat belly. Jumping on the river banks is a good idea though, if you want more gems.

THE JUNGLE BOOK

SEGA MASTER BLASTER

Hurrah! It's finally out on video and — hurrah! — it's out on the Master System and Game Gear, as well. No, not Confessions of a Window Cleaner, we're referring to Walt Disney's classic cartoon film.

There can't be anyone who hasn't heard of the classic Jungle Book, whether it's the animated Walt Disney film or the book by Rudyard Kipling. The story is of Mowgli, a defenceless lad who loses his parents and home village amid the terrifying jungle that becomes his home.



Mowgli is a brave little lad, I don't fancy attacking that snake with nothing but bananas for weapons!

On his travels through the thick forest in search of food and his family, Mowgli befriends a few animal friends that help him on his way. There's Baloo the bear, a friendly chap and a useful friend to have in the jungle, a dawn patrol of elephants and many others.

Rumbles in the jungle

The object of the game is to guide young Mowgli through 12 hair-raising levels that take place in and around the scary jungle. Mowgli's equipped with endless bananas to throw at enemies.

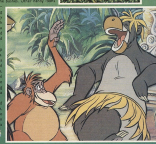
To make his bananas fire faster, he only has to collect the correct icon from the bushes. Other handy items include a boomerang — very effective for ridding Mowgli of those nasty jungle animals — health power-ups, continues (you start with none), limited invincibility shields and extra lives.

Mowgli comes up against some tough animals. As well as numerous monkeys, there are wild boars, parrots, crocodiles, hippos and end-of-level bosses such as King Louie (the large rock-throwing orangutan) and a huge boa constrictor.

If a level's completed within a certain time, Mowgli goes on to the Dawn Patrol bonus stage, in which he can collect extra lives, points and continues. MF



The giant snake is the first boss character you'll come across. Keep bouncing on his head to kill him! Use his small springy snakes to give our hero more height.





Yee-har! Grab the vine and the nimble lad swings to the other side like a demented Tarzan!

Gosh what a big tongue you have grandma! Hold on, your not my nan, get outta here!

If you complete the level with the correct number of special items collected and within the time limit Mowgli gets to move on to a bonus level full of elephants! Jump over the big beasts' backs and collect the bonus pieces of fruit. Life is really tough when you live in a platform game!

Nick raves...'Buy it!'

There isn't much I can say about this new Virgin cart that Rob hasn't already mentioned. Just go out right now and buy it — or at least put it on your list for Santa!

All the visuals, music, animation and levels are simply excellent. You'll recognise all the characters from the Disney movie and will want to watch the video, too (lucky it's come out for Christmas!).

Virgin always do an excellent job with their Game Gear and Master System games. The company that brought you classics like Global Gladiators and Cool Spot have hit the jackpot again — this is going to be big!

Watch out, Sonic and Tails, Mowgli and Baloo are here to give you a run for your money!

NICK 95%

Rob burps...'Hmm, bananas!'

It's certainly nice to see a fresh new face — or rather faces — on the Master System, especially when they're from one of my favourite Disney films. *The Jungle Book* is a lovely film that shows the so-called epics of today a thing or two. Playing the cart brought back memories, with all the cool animal characters making an appearance.

Oh, I think I might just stop for a while to weep... Boo, hoo... sniff, sniff... I'm sorry. The Jungle Book's a wonderfully animated platform romp through various levels full of vegetation and menacing monkeys. One of the most exceptional things is the faithful representation of the characters — the way they move is just so cool.

Although it's a platform game, The Jungle Book certainly isn't boring. The dramatic change in backdrops certainly isn't going to make you yawn.

The graphics are crisp, well detailed and colourful, and you'll recognise many of the old tunes that immediately set your feet a-tappin'. All the hits are here, everything from Bare Necessities to The King of the Swingers.

The Jungle Book may not have up-to-the-minute originality, but it's a must for anyone who owns a Master System.

ROB 92%

Whoops! One slip on a banana skin and our hero is hanging from a vine by his feet!

Don't throw apples! What a cheeky monkey!

MF Rating

The Jungle Book

Score	Category
94	Graphics
95	Sound
92	Playability
92	Lastability

A perfect game to complement the video. If you don't get both you need your head examined!

Virgin
£29.99

94

Platform
☎ 081 960 2255



Santa's ice castle at the North Pole has many locked doors. The previous level must be completed before Robocod can gain access to them.

ROBOC

SEGA MASTER BLASTER

James Pond has been a huge success on many console and home computer formats. When he arrived on the Master System he simply stole the show with his slick graphics and hot gameplay.

Take down the decorations, stop stuffing the turkey and get rid of that needle-dropping tree — Christmas is cancelled! A dodgy geezer by the name of Dr Maybe has kidnapped Santa Claus and halted all toy production in his North Pole factory. Who on earth can save the day!! Wait — can you smell fish?

Only one secret agent's fishy enough to rescue Santa and that's James Pond: codename Robocod. For this special mission, James has been given an Extendosuit to allow him to breath on land. This armoured suit protects him from many knocks and has a stretching mechanism to help James reach high platforms. By pulling his body into the suit, our hero can also make a pretty powerful bouncing bomb for blasting tough enemies.

This cute platform game is almost an exact copy of the highly successful Mega Drive version. The graphics, sound and levels are here in all their glory — nine theme areas with multiple levels, secret rooms and bad dudes in each. The object's to collect all the booby-trapped toy penguins Dr Maybe has planted around each level then find the exit. James' mission to rescue Santa must be completed in just 48 hours.

Fun with fins!

Themes for levels include teddy bears, cars, sports and a wacky circus, complete with big top. You must complete the levels then move on to the tough boss who guards the exit. A few bashes on the head and it's off to the next exciting area.

To kick off with, Robocod has three batteries of power in his Extendosuit but he can carry up to five. Every time he's hit by one of Dr Maybe's cronies, a battery's knocked off; when they're all gone he loses a life. Lives are recorded in a unique way — a James Pond hand in the bottom-left corner of the screen holds up fingers to show the number remaining.

There are lots of power-ups and collectables around the game. Yellow stars add an extra battery, tiny JPs give a life and all kinds of weird and wonderful objects bump up the score.

James Pond isn't confined to his fins in this cracker of a game. If he searches out the various vehicles and contraptions invented for him by the scientists at F.I.5.H headquarters, he can take a ride. There's a sports car, bath tub, plane and angel wings to discover.

Robocod is a one-player game and unfortunately there are no passwords, but it's so addictive you don't mind playing from scratch each time and three continues are a help.

Quick duck! No, actually I'm a goldfish and that over there is a bus with eyes — strange!


I'm for ever blowing bubbles! There's nothing like a nice bath after a long-day crime of fighting.


To complete each level Robocod must defuse all the booby trapped penguins that Dr Maybe has planted around the place, then find the flashing exit. Tough work for a tiny fish — he could get battered!

Gosh how scary — a giant teddy bear! But this bear has huge spikes on his bottom that will soon stop Robocod.

By pulling himself down into his armour James Pond can make a pretty effective bomb for bashing enemies.

Tim fillets... 'BOLD GRAPHICS'

This game has it all. There's everything from pink hippos to head-throwing snowmen, all bound together with a distinct smell of fish. I have to admit, I had reservations about *Robocod* to begin with. Trudging through a slimy old pond and mixing with fish isn't my idea of a good time. Nevertheless, I thoroughly enjoyed this cart.

You can leap through a vast array of entertaining levels, ranging from sports rooms to candy cupboards — there's even a shower room, just in case you're feeling grubby. It's not just a mass of stinky old pond weed, after all!

The graphics are worthy of a Mega Drive game. They're packed with colour and sprites are big and bold. The sonics are wonderful; US Gold have really made the most of the Master System's sound chip. Plenty of effects and a tune so catchy you'll be humming it for days. How annoying.

The gameplay's fast, furious, addictive and sickly-sweet. Although this is a challenging cart, it's instantly playable. Beware, everything about *Robocod* spells C.U.T.E. If you're a big softy, you'll love it. On the other hand, cynics might just throw up! **TIM 93%**

OCOD

Robocod conquers the world!

Everyone's favourite fishy secret agent has really made it big. After his humble beginnings in a swimmy game on the Commodore Amiga he burst onto the Sega scene with his hit games on the Mega Drive. It wasn't long before the invitations to public engagements came flooding in and he was launched into the public eye. Just take a look at what he's been up to recently.

'Yes John, you're doing fine, just keep talking.' To get himself into the House of Commons James Pond helps our PM out with his speech.

'Oh, jolly good show!' JP is always on hand to help out with a few Royal waves, but where's his hat?

'Did anyone ever tell you it's rude to point!' JP and Bill argue over who's the best guy!

'3, 2, 1, BLAST OFF!' Hold it, there's a giant fishy guy in a white tuxedo on the launch pad!

MF Rating

Robocod

94	Graphics
92	Sound
92	Playability
93	Lastability

A perfect conversion from the hit Mega Drive game — buy it.

93

US Gold
£34.99

Platform
☎ 021 625 3366





It's the dude in the dark shades and big white sneakers on the Master System. *Cool Spot* is one fantastic platform game — play it!

SEGA MASTER BLASTER

Cool Spot is one of the most original platform game characters to appear on consoles for a long time — and he's just so cool!

'What on earth is a 'Cool Spot'?', I hear you cry. Well... he's a spot, isn't he? A spot that wears white gloves and sneakers, plus a pair of dark shades to hide his piggy eyes. He's the coolest dude on the beach and drinks lots of fizzy pop!

This red, spotty hero started life squashed between the '7' and the 'Up' of the popular soft drink. In fact Virgin Games originally wanted a licensed game but legal reasons prevented them, so out goes Fido Dido and in comes Mr Cool Spot. The cart's still packed with fizzy bubbles and green bottles, though.

Okay, so it's another platform game, but the console wizards at Virgin have packed in some of the best sprite animation you'll ever see on the MS.

There are eleven luscious levels to bounce through and the object in each is to rescue your spotty pals. They've been captured by the evil Wild Wicked Willy Will (you what! — Ed) so he can prove to the world he's not mad and hasn't been imagining spots before his eyes.

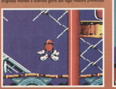
Free the zits!

There are a set number of small spots to rescue on each level and piles of bonuses and power-ups to collect. Bubbles can be used to float to higher levels and balloons swung on to move across the screen. Red spots are collected to free your mates, but collect more than necessary and you're blessed with a bonus level.

Cool Spot is one manic game. You bump into all kinds of creatures along the way: mice in pyjamas, bright yellow canaries, strange cowboys with big guns and mad pilots try to stop Spot rescuing his pals. You've got to duck, jump, slide and move around these nutters to put the hero through his paces — and hundreds of frames of animation.

With bonus games to play, neat presentation screens and plenty of levels to get stuck into, you'll be playing *Cool Spot* till the cows come home!

MF



There are lots of different levels, each with new obstacles and clever mazes to move the hero around.

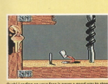


Diving head first into the sea isn't a good idea — spots aren't well known from their swimming abilities!

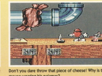
Leave the little guy alone for a few seconds and he'll start playing with his yo-yo — how cute.



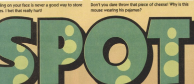
The task in each level is to collect enough red spots then rescue Cool Spot's pals from their cages.

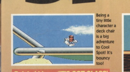


Ouch! Landing on your face is never a good way to store up extra lives. I bet that really hurt!



Don't you dare throw that piece of cheese! Why is this mouse wearing his pajamas?

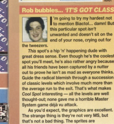




Being a tiny little character a deck chair is a big adventure to Cool Spot! It's bouncy too!



This is no time to play around — get rescuing!



Rob bubbles... *'IT'S GOT CLASS'*

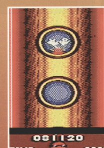
I'm going to try my hardest not to mention Biactol... damn! But this particular spot *isn't* unwanted and doesn't sit on the end of your nose, crying out for the tweezers.

This spot's a hip 'n' happening dude with great dress sense. Even though he's the coolest spot you'll meet, he's also rather angry because all his friends have been captured by a nutter out to prove he isn't as mad as everyone thinks. Guide the radical blemish through a succession of classic levels which involve much more than the average run to the exit. That's what makes *Cool Spot* interesting — all the levels are well thought-out; none gave me a horrible Master System game déjà vu attack.

As you'd expect, the graphics are excellent. The strange thing is they're not very MS, but that's not a bad thing. The sprites are wonderfully detailed and coloured, right down to the laces in Cool Spot's trainers. The sound's a little weak but humorous so you shouldn't hear shouts of 'Turn it down!' too often

Oh, how I wish all platform games showed as much thought and originality, instead of following normal trends and having level upon samey level full of dreary nasties — yawn. None of this in *Cool Spot* — it's got class!

ROB 89%

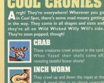


The brave little fella is trapped inside a suction tube — help him quick!



COOL CRONIES

Arrgh! They're everywhere! Wherever you go in *Cool Spot*, there's some mad meany getting in the way. They come in all shapes and sizes and they're all on Wild Wicked Willy Will's side. They're soon popped, though!



CRAB

These creatures crawl around in the sand. When 'fizzed' their shells come off, revealing tasteful boxer shorts!

INCH WORM

They crawl up and down the ropes at the pier. A good idea is to shoot upwards from the bottom of the rope.



BEDTIME MICE

Bedtime because they've got their pyjamas on! Shoot diagonally from below to sort these out.

SPIDERS

After *Arachnophobia*, these things give us the willies! Blast them out of their webs — quick!

FROGS

On the pond level, they sit on lilypads and you never spot them until it's too late. Pop 'em quick!

BIG SPIKES

These are difficult to spot at first but deadly to the touch. They can be jumped with care.

TINY TACKS

Like the spikes these will damage Cool Spot easily. Jump over them as they usually protect bonuses.



MF Rating

Cool Spot

92	Graphics
88	Sound
93	Playability
92	Lastability

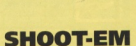
Slick animation, colourful visuals, trendy tunes and a good challenge for platform fans.

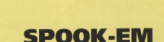
91

Virgin
£32.99

Platform
☎ 081 960 2255

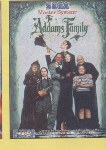



SHOOT-EM


SPOOK-EM

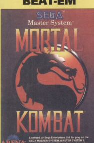

BLAST-EM

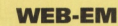

SEGA
Master System
RoboCop 3
FIRST TIME ON MASTER SYSTEM
FLYING EDGE


SEGA
Master System
The Addams Family
FLYING EDGE

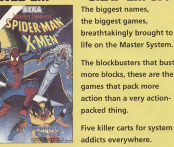

T2
TERMINATOR 2
JUDGMENT DAY
SEGA
Master System
FLYING EDGE
Licensed by Sega Enterprises, Ltd. for play on the SEGA MASTER SYSTEM, MASTER SYSTEM II, and MEGA DRIVE with MASTER SYSTEM CONVERTOR.

BEAT-EM





WEB-EM



SNAP-EM-UP.

The biggest names, the biggest games, breathtakingly brought to life on the Master System.

The blockbusters that bust more blocks, these are the games that pack more action than a very action-packed thing.

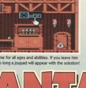
Five killer carts for system addicts everywhere.



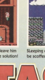


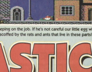
FANTASTIC DIZZY





Dizzy is a game for all ages and abilities. If you leave him alone for too long a joypad will appear with the solution!





Sleeping on the job. If he's not careful our little egg will be scoffed by the rats and ants that live in these parts!

Dizzy is the console cartoon hero that no-one should be without — he cracks me up!

Forget about your blue hedgehogs and dancing spots, there's a new hero in town and he's good whether boiled, scrambled or fried! Yes, Dizzy's an egg — but not a boring one that rolls around aimlessly with a cress fixation.

Dizzy has red gloves, stumpy legs and a cheeky grin. He lives along with other egg people, the Yolkfolk, in a treehouse village high above the land of Zakeria.

This was once a peaceful land where the Yolkfolk could go out collecting berries and chat to the troll creatures they share Zakeria with. That was until the evil wizard Zaks decided to kick up a stink. He put the whole kingdom under a black spell and made the trolls his soldiers.

Now he's kidnapped Dizzy's girlfriend, Daisy. She must be rescued and the land returned to its former, friendly self.

Just can't get an oeuf!

Fantastic Dizzy takes puzzle-solving and platform ingredients and throws them into a giant mixing bowl to create a unique console adventure for all ages.

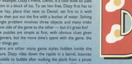
There *are* different levels, but they're linked together so Dizzy can walk freely between them. To progress, objects must be collected and used in the correct places to solve puzzles, open up new areas and help the Yolkfolk.

For example, Dizzy's friend, Denzil, is a cool dude so Zaks froze him in a block of ice. To set him free, Dizzy first has to find the hay, place that next to Denzil, set fire to it with matches then put out the fire with a bucket of water. Solving this single problem involves three objects and many treks from one side of the game to the other — but it's great fun!

The puzzles are simple at first, with obvious clues given for beginners, but the more time's spent with the game, the trickier things get.

There are other many game styles hidden inside the adventure. Dizzy rides down the rapids in a barrel, bounces from bubble to bubble after walking the plank from a pirate ship, takes a trip in a mine cart and completes a sliding puzzle for extra lives.

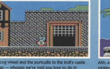
There's eggs-citement all the way — but will it set your head spinning? MF



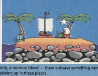




Deep down in the mine a lonely dragon lives. I wouldn't go too near him — he may be hungry!

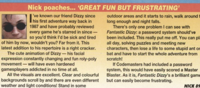


Grab a cog wheel and the portcullis to the troll's castle opens up — whoops we've told you how to do it!



Ahh, a treasure island — there's always something worth picking up in these places.

Nick poaches... 'GREAT FUN BUT FRUSTRATING'



I've known our friend Dizzy since his first adventure way back in 1987 and have probably reviewed every game he's starred in since — so you'd think I'd be sick and tired of him by now, wouldn't you? Far from it. This latest addition to his repertoire is a right cracker.

The cute animation of Dizzy — his facial expression constantly changing and fun roly-poly movement — will have even hardened gamesplayers addicted in no time at all.

All the visuals are excellent. Clear and colourful backgrounds scroll by and there are even different weather and light conditions! Stand in some outdoor areas and it starts to rain, walk around for long enough and night falls.

There's only one problem I can see with *Fantastic Dizzy*: a password system should've been included. This really put me off. You can play all day, solving puzzles and meeting new characters, then lose a life to some stupid ant or bat and have to start the whole adventure from scratch!

If Codemasters had included a password system, this would have easily scored a Master Blaster. As it is, *Fantastic Dizzy*'s a brilliant game, but can easily become frustrating.

NICK 89%



FIVE WAYS TO BE SCRAMBLED

The great thing about *Fantastic Dizzy* is that it's effectively five games in one! By adventuring around the land of Zakeria, Dizzy comes across vertically-scrolling cart rides, a shoot-'em-up in a castle and walks the dreaded plank. Codemasters certainly believe in giving value for money.

He's the king of the swinger zoo. With his trusty rope Diz can reach many new platforms for more exploring.

Go down the rapids with the little eggy hero. He jumps into a barrel and must avoid the crocs.

Ride the mine cart and avoid the trolls. There are various exits from this so choose the right one.

Complete a sliding puzzle of Dizzy and the wizard for an extra life — it's tough and you must be quick!

The trolls will throw stones to crack Dizzy's shell but grab a crossbow and they're history!

Bounce from bubble to bubble before they burst or it's right down to the bottom again!

Down at the bottom of the deep blue sea..

Rob oozes...'REALLY PLAYABLE!'

Hurrah! Everyone's favourite egg has finally made it to the Master System, as cheeky and egg-like as ever — only with better presentation (naturally). I'm determined not to make any awful yolks, but to say I was egg-static when I played *Fantastic Dizzy* is an understatement.

Guide the chucky-egg around tree-house complexes, caverns and treacherous waters, encountering poisonous spiders, charging rhinos and man-traps. Dizzy must rescue poor Daisy, a loveable little egglet who's been captured by Zaks, or be alone with his bread-and-butter soldiers.

After all those years of playing Dizzy games on the humble Spectrum, it made a welcome change to play Master System *Fantastic Dizzy*. Graphics are detailed and colourful, making it a real pleasure for the eyes, and the catchy main theme goes around in your head for a while after playing the game.

It's great to see Dizzy's still going strong. This game's as addictive and playable as any of his earlier games — a real winner.

ROB 85%

It looks like Dizzy has lost one of his precious lives.

MF Rating
Fantastic Dizzy

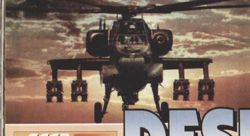
Score	Category
92	Graphics
91	Sound
86	Playability
84	Lastability

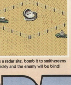
Packed with puzzles, this is an excellent adventure, but it's frustrating at times

87

Codemasters
£29.99

Arcade adventure
☎ 0926 814132





It's a radar site, bomb it to smithereens quickly and the enemy will be blind!

DESERT

SEGA MASTER BLASTER

Desert Strike was an instant hit on the Mega Drive and many thought it would never be converted to the MS or GG. But Domark proved us all wrong with this excellent game.

There's a red alert in the Middle East. General Kilbaba, an evil dictator, is threatening to wage nuclear war on the rest of the world. It's your job as a professional helicopter pilot to stop this nutcase and his evil army of fanatics.

Desert Strike's spread over four levels full of tough missions involving flying skills and military strategy — plan how to destroy targets without being blown out of the sky yourself! There are four or five missions per level which must be executed in the right order.

Missions involve destroying enemy radar sites (thus disabling their communications), bombing airfields, capturing scientists (for secret information) and finally blowing hell out of Kilbaba's hideout, bringing him to justice once and for all.

Just deserts!

It may sound pretty straightforward, but lots of nasty surprises lurk in the desert. Scattered around the sand-filled wastes are gun and missile emplacements, which need to be avoided or destroyed before they cause considerable damage.

When *Desert Strike's* paused, your damage is displayed as a percentage meter. This screen also keeps track of ammunition and fuel supplies, which can be topped up by collecting crates scattered around the desert. You can also rescue stranded troops from the mercy of Kilbaba's foot soldiers by winching them up in a similar fashion.

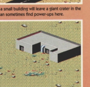
To access other levels quickly and easily, you're given a password which takes you straight to the start of the desired set of missions. These passwords differ, depending on you score, lives, ammo etc, so you can build on previous success and whup that madman's ass!



Once prisoners have been collected from their hiding places they must be dropped off at the waiting boat.



Blowing up a small building will leave a giant crater in the sand, you can sometimes find power-ups here.

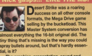


Tanks, barracks, radars, soldiers and power lines must all be attacked in the game — just like real life!



You start your first mission out in the ocean. Be careful not to bomb the ship!

Nick gasps... 'LIKE THE MD!'



Desert Strike was a roaring success on all other console formats, the Mega Drive game selling by the bucketload. This Master System conversion has almost everything the 16-bit original did. The *tiny* thing that's missing is the way you could spray bullets around, but that's hardly essential, is it?

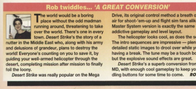
The graphics, presentation, sound and gameplay are fantastic. You can hardly tell the difference between this and the Mega Drive game. All the missions and co-pilots are here — there's even a detailed into sequence telling the story, complete with animated madman!

The thing is, I was never a fan of *Desert Strike*. I'm the sort of person who likes platform romps with cutesy characters and addictive gameplay. You've got to sit down with this game, read all the instructions and plan your moves carefully. This isn't a bad thing, though: some people prefer strategy and unpredictability.

If you fancy a good blast that needs a bit of thought, *Desert Strike* is for you. It's set to be just as successful as the Mega Drive original. Well done (again) Domark and The Kremlin programming team.

NICK 88%

Rob twiddles... *'A GREAT CONVERSION'*



The world would be a boring place without the odd madman running around, threatening to take over the world. There's one in every town. *Desert Strike*'s the story of a nutter in the Middle East who, along with his army and delusions of grandeur, plans to destroy the world! Everyone's counting on you to save it, by guiding your well-armed helicopter through the desert, completing mission after mission to finally foil the loony.

Desert Strike was really popular on the Mega Drive, its original control method a breath of fresh air for shoot-'em-up and flight sim fans alike. The Master System version is exactly the same in addictive gameplay and level layout.

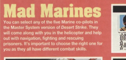
The helicopter looks cool, as does the scenery. The intro sequences are impressive — plenty of detailed static images to drool over while you're having a break. The tune may be a touch boring but the explosive sound effects are great.

Desert Strike's a superb conversion from the MD, with enough cool gameplay to keep you twiddling buttons for some time to come. **ROB 92%**

STRIKE

Mad Marines

You can select any of the five Marine co-pilots in the Master System version of *Desert Strike*. They will come along with you in the helicopter and help out with navigation, fighting and rescuing prisoners. It's important to choose the right one for you as they all have different combat skills.









It's all over for the crew of this helicopter. They didn't succeed in their mission because they're on fire!



Pressing Pause calls up the map and status screens in the game. Handy for finding those illusive radars.

Spot the difference!

When we plugged *Desert Strike* into the Master System, we couldn't believe how similar to the Mega Drive game it is.

Just take a look at the screenshots below. The one on the left is from the new Master System game, the one on the right is the same scene from the Mega Drive. Or is it the other way around! We'll let you decide.





What stops most people succeeding at Desert Strike is lack of fuel.



MF Rating

Desert Strike

Score	Category
85	Graphics
82	Sound
90	Playability
92	Lastability

A shoot-'em-up for the thinker. A brilliant conversion of the hit MegaDrive cart

90

Domark
£29.99

Strategy/shoot-'em-up
☎ 081 780 2222





Cosmic Spacehead

Codemasters certainly know a good game character when they see one. The people that brought you such heroes as Dizzy and Big Nose the Caveman now introduce Cosmic Spacehead!

Oh dear, things look grim for Cosmic Spacehead, the new Sega Game Gear character to stand up there with Sonic the Hedgehog, Mickey, Taz, Tails and the others.

After a pleasant visit to an odd new world called Earth, he arrived back at his home planet of Linoleum, excited and anxious to inform fellow space beings of his wondrous discovery, when he realised he hadn't brought back any proof.

Poor old Cosmic will look a right idiot if he gives his report empty-handed, and what's worse, there won't be a hero's welcome. The only thing he can do is return to Earth and take delightful photos of the uncharted planet. The main problem for our little hero is that he only has one Linodollar and no means of transport.

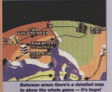
Space crazy!

It's your job to guide Spacehead through three main stops on his way to Earth — Linoleum, Detroitica and the Space Station — each split into a series of smaller levels. Guide Cosmic through these stages while interacting with characters and using objects that help his task.

The hero's controlled using a 'point and click' method, where an arrow moves Cosmic and selects commands (such as Move, Look, Examine, Give and Use) and objects to form sentences.

Each location has tasks which must be completed before you can continue. On the planet Linoleum, for example, Spacehead needs money, a passport and transportation. Later, he has to stop rogue robots causing a bit of a rumpus at a Detroitica factory, while in the Space Station he must top up a space craft's tank — but doesn't have the right currency to buy fuel.

There are all kinds of sub-games to complete along the way, including an excellent racing simulation to win a special prize. Cosmic!



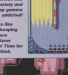
Between areas there's a detailed map to show the whole game — it's huge!

Some of the platform levels are tricky — but Cosmic doesn't look worried!

NICK 86% I've already raved about the Master System version of this great cart and the Game Gear version's exactly the same! So I won't ramble on again...

Except to say I had to suffer one of those terrible coach journeys recently. I took along a copy of *Cosmic Spacehead* for my Game Gear and became totally engrossed. When I looked up from the screen, I'd arrived at my destination (the Live '93 show in London!); the hours had slipped by.

This just goes to show what an addictive game *Cosmic Spacehead* is. Get it now!



Cosmic has lots of sub-games which add variety and keep gamers addicted!

It looks like we're keeping the brave adventurer awake! Time for bed I think.



Strange cave paintings and a password pick-up — what will Cosmic use those for I wonder?

ROB 84% It's about time a new hero appeared on the Sega. The sight of a blue flash onscreen was — although enjoyable at first — getting a bit annoying. The recent addition is a perky little character by the name of Cosmic Spacehead.

For a change it's not a case of cool hero in a bland platformer that takes you a day to complete. *Cosmic Spacehead*'s an originally laid-out arcade adventure — another winner from Codemasters.

Using the 'point and click' controls is strange at first; it takes practice to get used to the layout and numerous commands but it's time well spent. Graphically it's wonderful, bursting with colour and good animation. The sound FX and music are bubbly and, most important, don't irritate the ears.

It's great to play a game with a new character, originality and enough depth to take your mind off the blue spiky one!

Cosmic Spacehead
Codemasters
£24.99

Rating	Score
Graphics	86
Sound	85
Playability	83
Lastability	80

85 — Perfectly converted from the Master System game. All the puzzles and all the great graphics

Adventure — ☎ 0926 814132

Cool Spot

Cool Spot is not only a big star on the Master System, he's doing his bit on the Game Gear too. Take a look at this cool game…

All is not well with the newest hero on the Sega Game Gear, Cool Spot: his dear spotty friends have been captured by an insane villain, Wild Wicked Willy Will. He hopes to prove the spots before his eyes are real and he's not three sandwiches short of a picnic after all.

The object of this particularly wacky outing is for Cool Spot to wander through eleven colourful levels and gather enough coolness (little spots) to free his mates.

On the way he uses his fizz-blast on creatures trying to stop our hero from reaching his goal. Spot encounters crabs, inch-worms, spiders, mice, soldiers and many other snapping, biting and shooting characters.

Squeeze 'em hard!

To complete each level, a number of floating spots must be collected to free the trapped living spot at the end. Time bonuses give extra seconds to carry out the mission, potions top up Cool Spot's energy bar and Virgin icons give continues.



Grab the balloon, fire a shot at the cage and your mate is free!

Ooo, that mouse trap could do our hero some serious damage.

Game Gear *Cool Spot* combines original, fun graphics with equally original gameplay. Levels are set in a wide range of settings. There's the hot beach, which resembles something from *Baywatch*, the dangers of a pier, house, toy shop…

Collect 20 more than the required number of spots and you enter a bonus level, which involves jumping from balloon to balloon and collecting lots of lovely bonus points.

The in-game instructions are clear and straight to the point!

ROB 88%

Spots, spots, spots! All I can see is spots before my eyes! The reason? I've been playing the new Game Gear epic, *Cool Spot*. Unlike other platformers on the GG, it keeps you glued to the tiny screen for ages.

This is mainly because of the star of the show, a big red spot with trainers and sunglasses who wanders through a succession of cool but tricky stages to save his spotty friends. Guide the pimple dude around the hazards, picking up spots and bonuses to keep him at peak coolness.

Cool Spot's perfect for the GG. The main sprite's easy to control and each level's challenging enough to keep you playing. The graphics are great; painstaking detail has been added to Cool Spot and the many backgrounds. The music and sound FX are a bit lame but won't spoil your enjoyment.

If ever there was a game to show off the GG, *Cool Spot's* the one — it's original, enjoyable to play and great to look at.

You crabs don't scare me! I laugh in your face and ridicule your spotty boxer shorts!

NICK 92%

He's a great little chap, this Cool Spot. He's the star of a brand new platform game and is set to rock the world with his cheeky antics and addictive gameplay. The Game Gear version looks just like the Master System game — highly colourful levels packed with wild, wacky characters and fantastic animation on the main man.

Unlike many platform games I could mention, *Cool Spot's* quite a challenge for experienced gamesplayers. In most games, you can just rush through each level, defeat the bosses and be watching the end sequence before you know it. You have to be a lot more careful where you put Cool Spot's size one sneakers, as there are all kinds of creatures out to get him and lots of water hazards to avoid — spots can't swim, you know!

All this plus fizzy bonus games and tricky level layouts make a fantastic game you'll be proud to have in your cart collection.

Cool Spot
Virgin
£24.99

Score	Category
92	Graphics
88	Sound
89	Playability
89	Lastability

90 — A fantastic platform game with some of the coolest visuals ever to hit the Game Gear.

Platform ☎ 081 960 2255

Micro Machines

These Micro Machines may be tiny toys but they make one big game. Packed with playability and cool graphics this is a winner!

Micro Machines is a wild and wacky racer with a difference: its vehicles are half the size of a matchbox and you drive them through extremely unusual terrain.

Pick your character from the list of eleven on offer, each with a different degree of racing skill, then compete against three computer-controlled players.

First take part in a bath tub qualifying race. Win this and you're through to the proper game.

The 25 varied levels allow you to control tricky tanks in the toy room level, skid around a sand-pit in a racing jeep, dodge nails, glue and oil in the workshop and even fly a tiny helicopter in the garden level.

To qualify for the next race, you have to be first or second past the chequered flag; any lower and you forfeit a life and must try again.

When you win a certain number of races, you enter a bonus round in which you tackle an obstacle-laden course within a time limit to receive an extra life.

If a one-player game doesn't suit you, grab a friend and battle it out in the head-to-head. To score points, speed ahead of your opponent so he disappears off the screen.

Size isn't important — speed is! ■



There are lots of characters you can select to race against in this cool game. Here's just a small selection.

These trucks are really tough. They'll go over all kinds of terrain — but not water!

The sports cars in Micro Machines give the fastest and most addictive races.

Around the beach these buggies really move and skid on every corner.

The oil slicks will send you into a spin if you drive through them.

ROB 89% I was well impressed with this little racing sim. The Mega Drive version was packed with playability and this is an almost exact copy. I particularly like the characters you choose at the start of the game. Trouble is, none of them look anything like me — lucky for them!

It's a real novelty to race around a breakfast table, complete with cereal packet jumps and orange juice stains which slow the cars down. I'm always bombarded by other vehicles, though — they push me off the table onto the floor! Oh, I wish I was a better gamesplayer!

Micro Machines is the sort of game you'll come back to again and again. Thoroughly recommended.

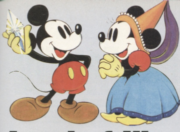
NICK 91% *Micro Machines* is a real favourite of mine. I first played it on the 8-bit Nintendo (yeuck!) but thankfully it's been converted to Sega systems. The tiny vehicles you race around odd racing tracks are licensed from Galoob's toys. This is what makes *Micro Machines* so original — where else could you drive on a breakfast table or chess set?

Codemasters have done a great job of squeezing it onto the Game Gear. All the graphics are smooth and slick, packed with colour and animation. Players choose from a wide selection of competitors who all have strengths and weaknesses.

If you're a fan of racing sims, you'll be addicted to *Micro Machines* from the word 'go'. It's extremely fast and has lots of variety so you'll never get fed up of it. The 25 tracks can be played as a one-player challenge or two-player tournament, using the Gear-to-Gear link.

Either way, you'll be playing this baby till the cows come home!







Leap onto the balls on the right. Use them as a platform but don't dilly-dally, you soon fall off!



Land of Illusion Starring Mickey Mouse

Everybody loves Mickey Mouse with his cheeky cheesy grin and fixation with the beautiful Minnie. This Game Gear platformer is his latest adventure.

Mickey dozed off while reading a book and ended up being teleported to a magical world. But it was nothing like the colourful pictures in his story book. The sky was dark, the grass grey, the landscape washed out.

A young girl Mickey met in the nearest village explained the dreariness. A sadistic spectre had half-inched the jewel which gave the kingdom its magic. The locals needed a saviour to find the jewel, do away with the ghoul and return their land to its former splendour. Yep, you guessed — Mickey volunteered!

Guide Mickey through 14 fantasy-filled levels, dodging baddies and locating the exits. If you've played the MD game, *World Of Illusion*, you'll spot a couple of familiar features, like the piano which churns out power-ups and giant blooms which shoot you to higher platforms.

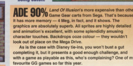
Preliminary stages are fairly straightforward. Move from left to right, bottom-bouncing bad guys. Expect confrontations with snakes, bees, ghosts and worms.

In the underwater section, fish *can't* be bottom-bounced. Either swim around them or lob the nearest object in their path.

Your goal is to locate magic potions, which are the key to secret doors. Find the phial, pop the cork and your route to the next level becomes clear.

This outs puts puzzle-solvers in their element. There are loads of pick-ups, too. Smash boulders to reach chests or fling them at adversaries. Gold blocks are used as stepping stones, while springs help Mickey over high walls. A shrinking potion allows access through gaps. A rope helps Mick tackle mountain peaks and lanterns shed light on otherwise darkened levels.

The spectre has laid a bag of tricks and traps for unsuspecting gamers. He knows you're coming to dinner. Make sure it's not *you* who ends up in the soup. ■





Yikes! Mickey encounters a snake at the top of a tree. He throws an apple to avoid being eaten.

ADE 90% *Land Of Illusion*'s more expensive than other Game Gear carts from Sega. That's because it has more memory — 4 Meg, in fact, and it shows. The graphics are absolutely superb. All sprites are highly detailed and animation's excellent, with some splendidly amusing character touches. Backdrops ooze colour — they wouldn't look out of place on the Mega Drive.

As is the case with Disney tie-ins, you won't bust a gut completing it, but it presents a good enough challenge, and with a game as playable as this, who's complaining? One of my favourite GG games so far this year.

MAT 89% YES, it was worth the wait. Along with *Sonic 2, Land Of Illusion* surely rates as the top handheld platform game. Everything that's found in the MS version is included (though smaller). Each level's decked out in bright, cartoony colours, but there's time to stop and stare, because action and excitement are non-stop as Mickey bounces through this enchanted land.

My only gripe is it's far too easy and I had little trouble completing it in a few hours. Unlimited continues make the going easier still.

Wacky levels, bizarre creatures, secret passages and thrilling platform action are what this is all about. A definite purchase.



Land of Illusion	
Sega £32.99	89
90	Graphics
85	Sound
88	Playability
78	Lastability

A brilliant platform and puzzle game. One for your collection

Platform — Comtazia 0384 261698

The Addams Family

The stars of the hit 60s TV show burst onto the Game Gear just in time for Christmas with an addictive new platform game and some spooky goings on!

If you're familiar with the classic Sixties American comedy series, not forgetting the two recent films, you'll welcome *The Addams Family* to the Game Gear with open arms. It's full of uncharted caverns, secret rooms and treasure to find, while fending off a constant bombardment of strange nasties who inhabit these places.

The main character in this particular adventure is the suave, sophisticated Gomez, the head of the household. Poor Gomez has the unfortunate task of seeking out the hidden members of his family by wandering the huge mansion and its accompanying secret caves and rooms.

Each room represents a level; you must guide Gomez through a succession of rooms in order to rescue members of the family, who are held by end-of-level guardians.

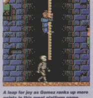
Creepy collectables

To help Gomez on his way through the maze of rooms, collect items to keep him in tip-top condition. The most common pick-me-ups are hearts, which replenish lost energy.

Next are handy items such as boots, which enable you to move faster, swords to defend yourself with and a very fetching fez fitted with a propeller, to help you reach normally inaccessible high areas.

Great care's needed when in possession of such items: if Gomez makes contact with a rogue rabbit, fire-spitting plant, swinging spiky nasty or any of the other harmful creatures, the item's lost.

The rooms/levels include underground caves, hot furnaces with fireballs and a library full of oversized books and jumping nasties. Once you've found the family, you have to hunt out the treasure to complete the game and save The Addams Family from extinction.



A leap for joy as Gomez ranks up more points in this great platform game.

Ooo! That Addams Family mansion looks really spooky, doesn't it?

NICK 74% The Addams Family have appeared on every home computer and console format imaginable so it's about time they appeared on the Game Gear. Their game is a platformer (surprise, surprise) where the player controls the head of the family, Gomez.

All the visuals look wonderful on the small screen, with detailed animation and bags of colour. The platforms are just too fiddly to jump around, though. Gomez's movements are awkward and there are many places where a single wrong move loses you a life.

That's my only niggle with *The Addams Family*. If you have the patience to persevere, there are lots of cool levels and great possessed beings to bounce on in a *Mario*esque manner.

I don't know whether you're sick and tired of platform games yet, but they need to have something really special to stand out from the crowd these days; unusual level designs are the best feature here. *The Addams Family*'s not the easiest game to play so be warned.

ROB 88% Hurrah! The spookiest family in America arrive on the Game Gear and they're as weird and wonderful as ever. The game's set around their mansion, in which old Gomez must rescue his captured family from a fate worse than death: the loss of their family home and fortune.

The Addams Family's a platform romp through spooky rooms and grounds outside the house. But before you cry 'Not another platform game!' I must tell you it's wonderfully original, with plenty of cool graphics, fun and frolics as you make your way through the levels.

The visuals are among the best features. The main sprites are big, clear and beautifully detailed. Soundwise, the theme tune from the Sixties' TV programme is here in all its hummable glory.

This is the type of game you should be playing on your GG; it's original without being too clever and has plenty of playability to keep your hands glued to the controls.

(Right)Look out! That geezer is about to throw a plant pot on Gomez's head!

(Left) You can see for miles from the top of the gravestones in the cemetary.

With chomping venus fly traps and ghost 'n' goblins everywhere it's probably best to stay low.

The Addams Family

Acclaim

£27.99

Score	Category
88	Graphics
78	Sound
82	Playability
76	Lastability

81

A good-looking platform game with some fiddly platforms, but still playable

Platform

☎ 071 344 5000

Wolfchild

Wolfchild was originally a MEGA-CD game which never really took off, but on the Game Gear it soon became a howling success!

Things aren't going well for Saul Morrow. His father's been kidnapped and the rest of his family slaughtered (Poll Tax collectors having their revenge, I see! —Ade). Saul's dad is a genetic scientist and in his latest venture, Project Wolfchild, he's combined genes from intellectuals and various savage animals to produce creatures with incredible strength and amazing psychic abilities.

A terrorist organisation has twigged on to the project and plan to take over the world using a new superhuman race. The organisation's leader, Karl Draxx, sent an assault squad to the scientist's lab to steal his plans and kidnap him.

Dog eat dog

On his return home from a short vacation, Saul finds the trail of destruction. Vowing revenge, the young whipper-snapper makes the brave decision to step into the transmutation chamber. His only chance of defeating Draxx and his henchmen is to transform into one of his father's genetically-engineered creations — a Wolfchild.

The small screen graphics are just as impressive as the MS and MD ones.

Down one of the tunnels, hiding from the monsters — what a wimp!

You start play on the Wolf Ship as Saul. The playing area scrolls horizontally and vertically as you leap from platform to platform, shooting bad guys and collecting power-ups.

In human form, Saul can only punch adversaries. These take the form of huge spitting plants and numerous guards. If Saul collects the Wolf icon, he transforms into the man-monster and can shoot fireballs.

Eventually you come face to face with Draxx himself. Triumph in this showdown and dad can ensure Project Wolfchild's a howling success! ■

ADE 76% The wee GG never ceases to amaze me. Mega-CD *Wolfchild* was a pretty poor affair but the small screen version's a damn good blast. It suits the handheld and is a good conversion of the CD game.

Graphics aren't mind-blowing — a bit samey in places and colour's sparse — but they're atmospheric, well detailed and move well. Talking of animation, the main sprite has his fair share: he runs, leaps, crouches and thumps like a good un' and the transformation from man to wolf is pretty nifty.

There don't appear to be as many power-ups in this version, particularly on earlier levels. I only located extra energy and points icons, plus a smart bomb or two. That said, it's a heck of a lot tougher than the Mega-CD version. One of our bods finished the CD game in half a day; it'll take a lot longer than that to conquer the handheld version.

The sound's okay but nothing memorable — a reasonable title tune, spot FX and racey themes add to the tension.

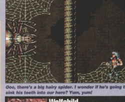
Wolfchild's a good platform shooter. Some may find it samey and monotonous, but I reckon it's worth a try.

STEVE 81% I used to be a werewolf but I'm all right nooooooooow! *Wolfchild* doesn't hang about when it comes to fast and furious shoot-'em-up action: from the very first ship-bound level there are plenty of enemies to take a pop at and power-ups galore... you find yourself in the thick of the action from the bleep 'go'!

Presentation is excellent, with a thankfully fuss-free password system and choice of difficulty settings, while the graphics are nothing short of impressive, too. Gameplay follows the tried and tested 'explore everywhere while killing every*thing*' style, and only the — anorak warning! — collision detection is slightly suspect (punching enemies can be awkward as you appear to deliver a satisfactory upper-cut without actually landing one on the chin).

Despite this minor niggle — you'll soon work out the optimum striking distance — Game Gear *Wolfchild* is an engaging blast, with plenty of neat touches and loads to see. End-of-level guardians don't always appear as deadly as they really are (wolves in sheep's clothing, perhaps?), but the password system keeps frustration to a minimum. Worth checking out...

When an energy power-up is collected the hero changes into a werewolf with more abilities and powers.



Ooo, there's a big hairy spider. I wonder if he's going to sink his teeth into our hero? Yum, yum!



Wolfchild

Virgin
£27.99

77	Graphics
71	Sound
75	Playability
78	Lastability

79

Better than the Mega-CD version. A good platform shoot-'em-up

Platform ☎ 081 960 2255



Game Gear Guide

Don't buy another Game Gear cart until you've consulted the SEGA MASTER FORCE guide to the best handheld offerings available. These are all the games reviewed in Sega Force plus the new ones we've covered in this magazine. Check these out!

4-In-1
Compilation Sega £29.99 63%
Columns, tennis, football and racing clones. Two games let it down badly. Think seriously before buying.

Aerial Assault
Shoot-'em-up Sega £23.99 48%
Fly over cities with a pile of weapons to throw at passers-by. A rubbish shoot-'em-up, lacking any thrills.

Alien 3
Shoot-'em-up Acclaim £27.99 84%
Blast around a space backdrop with the star of the spooky film, Ripley. Acclaim have done a fine job. A must-buy for Alien fans!

Alien Syndrome
Shoot-'em-up Sega £29.99 79%
A good Game Gear release, showing off the machine's capabilities, but with only four levels it's a bit too easy.

Batman Returns
Beat-'em-up Sega £24.99 84%
The Caped Crusader... returns! A great film game that suffers from a lack of challenge. There are some massive guardians to deal with!

Chakan: The Forever Man
Beat-'em-up Sega £29.99 69%
Supernatural happenings with big swords! Could've been brilliant but the difficulty level's very unfriendly. Try before you buy.

Chuck Rock
Platform Virgin £27.99 92%
Prehistoric antics with really cool graphics.It's pretty difficult but platform fans may soon master it.

Crash Dummies
Arcade Acclaim £27.99 81%
The Incredible Crash Dummies make a brilliant handheld debut. There are four levels of vastly different gameplay.

Crystal Warriors
RPG Sega £24.99 63%
A roleplaying game with loads of characters and a battery back-up. There's loads to do but the sprites are a little on the small side.

Defenders of Oasis
RPG Sega £27.99 90%
Packed with action, this is a truly wonderful role-playing game. Plenty to keep you guessing. Buy it!

Double Dragon Xtra
Beat-'em-up Virgin £24.99 50%
A beat-'em-up through tough streets, converted from the coin-op. A tired series but Virgin have done a reasonable job. We'd plump for *Streets of Rage* instead.

Evander Holyfield Boxing
Sport Sega £29.99 81%
With a two-player option and exhibition fights, this is a cool boxing sim. It has loads to offer fans of the sport.

Fantastic Dizzy
Adventure Codemasters £24.99 83%
Full of puzzles and arcade elements. A big game with puzzles a-plenty and arcade sections to test the reflexes. Brilliant.

Fantasy Zone
Shoot-'em-up Sega £24.99 66%
A colourful shoot-'em-up which sadly lacks variety. Only for hardened fans of the genre!

George Foreman's KO Boxing
Sport Flying Edge £29.99 55%
Here's a sporting game that hits well below the belt. A poor boxing sim, too easy to master.

Global Gladiators
Platform Virgin £27.99 87%
As a Game Gear cart, it's a stunner. Maybe easy for some but great fun and instantly playable. Another great Virgin game.

G-LOC Air Battle
Shoot-'em-up Sega £24.99 92%
An inaccurate conversion of the arcade game but brilliant in its own right. There are some great static screens.

Halley Wars
Shoot-'em-up Taito £28.99 82%
A highly polished shoot-'em-up but nothing original or outstanding in the gameplay department.

Home Alone
Platform Sega £29.99 63%
Set traps for the burglars in this average movie tie-in. Original but lacks variety. Another wasted licence.

Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade
Platform US Gold £29.99 88%
Packed with cool sprites and animation, this is a brilliant movie game. It'll have you on the edge of your seat!

Joe Montana Football
Sport Sega £24.99 60%
There aren't many decent American Football games around on the Game Gear. This is the only one worth playing.

Junction
Puzzle Sega £29.99 36%
Roll red balls around a screen full of checkpoints. Another variation on the ancient sliding puzzle idea. Too tricky, not enough fun.

Klax
Arcade Domark £27.99 82%
Arcade conversion where tiles must be stacked to form rows. Nice one, Tengen and Domark. Better than tiling the bathroom any day!

Krusty's Fun House
Puzzle Flying Edge £29.99 89%
A superior game which combines tricky puzzles with fast platform action. Simpsons fans will love every minute of it!

Land of Illusion
Platform Sega £32.99 89%
Mickey Mouse adventures through cool levels of cartoon action. A brilliant platform and puzzle game.

Lemmings
Puzzle Sega £29.99 94%
The little suicidal rodents need saving. If you're tired of shoot-'em-ups and maze games, get this.

Little Mermaid
Adventure Sega £29.99 65%
A poor quality film licence aimed squarely at the younger market. Disney-ish cartoony graphics give it a nice animated feel.

Lucky Dime Caper
Platform Sega £32.99 78%
Donald Duck stars in this cartoon-style platform game with some really nice graphics. Disappointing compared to the MS original, though.

Marble Madness
Puzzle Domark £27.99 77%
Marble-racing along a semi-3D scrolling landscape. This game's unique and another great conversion from Tengen and Domark.

Master of Darkness
Platform Sega £29.99 81%
Spooky goings-on with vampires and eerie levels. Not the most original game around but a challenge and loads of fun.

Ninja Gaiden
Beat-'em-up Sega £24.99 71%
Playable hack-'em-up that won't make you commit suicide after buying it. It's marred by a lack of mid-level restart points.

Olympic Gold
Sport US Gold £24.99 92%
The perfect portable sports sim. Crystal-clear sprites and movement plus good music and sound effects.

OutRun Europa
Racing US Gold £24.99 74%
Arcade conversion with faultless graphics and good scrolling. Great for driving game freaks, not so great for others.

Pac-Man
Arcade Domark £24.99 93%
The classic arcade game's a must for handheld console owners. All that munching power pills and chasing ghosts — it's brilliant!

Paperboy
Arcade Domark £27.99 76%
It's stood the test of time. Another good conversion of an old arcade game. Fun in short bursts but not a game to play all day.

Pengo
Arcade Sega £24.99 60%
Tackle 64 levels packed with puzzling fun. Only for real puzzle fans who love having their brains teased.

Popils
Puzzle Domark £27.99 85%
Mark out a route through the evil Wiz's mazes and reach the distressed damsel. It's sickly cute but up there with the best of 'em! Terrific.

Predator 2
Shoot-'em-up Acclaim £27.99 66%
Another movie tie-in. Not a bad little blaster but gameplay becomes samey after a few plays.

Prince of Persia
Platform Domark £27.99 95%
Leap around platforms to rescue your girlfriend from the evil Grand Vizier. This game's packed with fantastic animation and challenging levels. Another must.

Put & Putter Miniature Golf
Sport Sega £24.99 50%
Golf fans and anyone under three will get some pleasure out of this fun little sim. There aren't enough options, though.

Shinobi 2: The Silent Fury
Platform Sega £29.99 84%
Rescue your trapped brothers and defeat oriental enemies. A smart ninja platform outing — don't be put off by the guardians!

Slider
Puzzle Sega £24.99 69%
A puzzling game with a high frustration factor. Colourful graphics but similar throughout.

Smash TV
Shoot-'em-up Flying Edge £27.99 34%
A frantic blaster in futuristic TV studio setting. This is a dreadful conversion which never should've appeared.

Solitaire Poker
Puzzle Sega £24.99 91%
Good-looking, sounding and playing card game with loads of options to choose from. Get it now!

Sonic The Hedgehog
Platform Sega £24.99 89%
That speedy flea-ridden hedgehog's first adventure on the Sega and a great conversion of the MD and MS games. Hours of fun guaranteed.

Sonic 2
Platform Sega £29.99 93%
This hedgehog needs no introduction. Not the best version of the game but the most challenging. A must-have!

Space Harrier
Shoot-'em-up Sega £24.99 92%
Manic 3D action with huge enemies. Great action, great conversion, great game! There are no options but handy passwords.

Spider-Man
Platform Flying Edge £24.99 91%
Comic-book capers come to life. A fantastic platform game, one of the best on the Game Gear — almost better than *Sonic*!

Spider-Man 2: Return of the Sinister Six
Platform Flying Edge £27.99 82%
Good web-slinging game with enough action to keep most game-freaks happy. Good, solid sprites with loads of colour.

Streets of Rage
Beat-'em-up Sega £27.99 81%
Disappointing compared to the MD but a great mash 'n' bash in its own right. There are some hot sprites and plenty of pick-ups.

Strider II
Arcade US Gold £24.99 76%
Leap around platforms, swinging a laser sword and throwing shuriken stars. A big improvement on the original. Offers a big if frustrating challenge.

Super Kick Off
Sports US Gold £24.99 80%
An effective, well presented footy sim with loads of variations of pitch and players to keep sad soccer fans happy. Ooo!

Super Off Road
Arcade Virgin £27.99 87%
Speed around rough tracks in 4x4 trucks. A smart racing game. Takes skill to master but you won't switch off!

Super Space Invaders
Shoot-'em-up Domark £27.99 72%
The classic arcade machine is brought into the Nineties in style. Great for fans of the original but tiresome for others.

Superman
Platform Virgin £27.99 64%
Is it a bird? Is it a plane? Is it a good game? Not the best Virgin handheld release we've seen. Fun for a while.

Talespin
Platform Sega £29.99 52%
More cartoon capers on the small screen from Walt Disney. A wasted licence. Above average gameplay but not recommended.

Taz-Mania
Platform Sega £29.99 84%
That famous Warner Bros character spits and snarls on the Game Gear. A good conversion but should've been tougher.

Tengen World Cup Soccer
Sport Tengen £27.99 79%
Get out your boots for another game of footy. Not quite in the same league as *Super Kick Off* but a definite contender for the cup.

The Terminator
Shoot-'em-up Virgin £27.99 87%
Arnie does his stuff in style. Good graphics, great playability. Even when completed, you'll play it over again.

Tom & Jerry
Platform Sega £29.99 48%
The arch-rivals from the hit cartoons come to life on the GG. A good-looking game marred by meagre lastability. A real shame.

Wolfchild
Shoot-'em-up Virgin £27.99 79%
Half man, half werewolf, with piles of power-ups to collect and cool graphics. Better than the Mega-CD version. A good platform shoot-'em-up.

WonderBoy 3
Platform Sega £29.99 82%
Another arcade adventure conversion, this one a smart platform game with a large dollop of fun! The WonderBoy games are always a good buy.

MASTER MARKET

You put that fiver back in your pocket young 'un! Don't you even think about buying a new game without checking out the SEGA MASTER FORCE Master Market first. Here, we've listed all the games that are worth looking at. If it's not here it ain't much cop!

Arcade

Coin-op conversions and mixed-genre games make these carts the most action-packed around. Old classics and revamps, like in Virgin's compilation, have the post staying power.

ARCADE SMASH HITS — 85%
VIRGIN £32.99 Tel 081 960 2255
These updated versions of Missile Command, Centipede and Break Out are weak individually but together form a good package, especially for the newcomer. Where else can you get games for £11 each?

BACK TO THE FUTURE II — 62%
IMAGE WORKS £34.99 Tel N/A
Racing, beat-'em-up and two puzzle sections make up this game-of-the-film. Crude, flickery graphics and frustrating gameplay put it firmly in the past.

THE FLINTSTONES — 61%
GRANDSLAM £29.99 Tel 081 680 7044
As Fred, paint the living room, drive to the bowling alley, bowl (surprised?) and rescue Pebbles. Boring gameplay isn't rescued by cartoony but could-do-better graphics.

MARBLE MADNESS — 76%
VIRGIN £32.99 Tel 081 960 2255
Under a time limit, guide a fragile marble over strange landscapes and past weird creatures. Great graphics and unique gameplay but too few levels.

MASTER OF DARKNESS — 77%
SEGA £32.99 Tel 071 373 3000
As Dr Social, track Dracula through five levels of Olde London. Spooky graphics and sounds as you tackle mesmerised creatures. Soon gets tough.

MORTAL KOMBAT — 92%
ACCLAIM £34.99 Tel 071 344 5000
The classic arcade machine comes to life complete with blood and gore. It's possible the most violent and addictive game ever to reach the Master System and includes some amazing digitised animation. Brilliant.

MS PACMAN — 88%
DOMARK £34.99 Tel 081 780 2222
Essentially the old fave, Pac-man, Ms has a feminine sprite, speed-up option, selectable mazes and skill settings. Ancient coin-op graphics but all the playability.

RENEGADE — 67%
SEGA £34.99 Tel 071 373 300 Your gir been nabbed and you use punches, kicks, knee-butts and overarm throws to mangle the punks responsible. The graphics are too clean for the gritty but repetitive action.

STREETS OF RAGE — 81%
SEGA £32.99 Tel 071 373 3000
Clean up the streets as you head for a crime boss's skyscraper headquarters. There's an array of moves and weapons, cool sprites and good FX. Truly exciting gameplay; a class beat-'em-up.

STRIDER 2 — 74%
US GOLD £32.99 Tel 021 625 3366
The Master's causing trouble again, but this time Strider's fast as well as graceful. Some of the robot guardians are unfairly tough but the action's engaging enough. A 'try before you buy'.

SUPERMAN — 66%
VIRGIN £TBA Tel 081 960 2255
Several of Metropolis's inhabitants have gone missing — including Superman's beloved Lois Lane! He can't use all his powers in the same stage and must collect icons to keep energy up. Graphics are action-packed but the Man of Steel's difficult to control and the tasks are tiresome.

Arcade Adventure

Perfect for those who want to use equal parts of brain and digital dexterity. Prince Of Persia sports the best MS animation ever.

ASTERIX — 82%
SEGA £32.99 Tel 071 373 3000
The heroic Gaul and his fat chum, Obelix, are on the way to Rome to rescue their druid chum, Getafix. Each level can be played as Asterix or Obelix, which alters the hazards and features subtley or drastically. Use their different characteristix to defeat Romans and solve cunning platform puzzles. Sprites are almost identical to the comic characters, playability's high and there's masses to do — twice.

BART VS THE SPACE MUTANTS — 92%
FLYING EDGE £32.99 Tel 0962 877788
Space Mutants are making a machine to conquer the world — only Bart knows about it! Colourful backgrounds and cartoon sprites on par with the MD, good FX and samples back it up.

FANTASTIC DIZZY — 87%
CODEMASTERS £29.99 Tel: 0926 814132
Packed with puzzles, this is an excellent adventure game, but can be frustrating at times. If Codemasters had included a password system there would've been a lot more playability, but as it is you'll still want to stick with it and see what lies ahead.

HEROES OF THE LANCE — 68%
US GOLD £32.99 Tel 021 625 3366
Billed as an RPG, it's even an exaggeration to call this an arcade adventure. Send your band of eight adventurers in search of the Disks of Mishakal. Simple arcade combat and sluggish controls but bold graphics and a huge playing area. No save option, though!

LAND OF ILLUSION — 92%
SEGA £32.99 Tel 071 373 3000
Mickey Mouse is searching for a jewel and the phantom who stole it. Mickey bum-bounces some enemies, throws rocks on others. Special items have to be found and used to complete levels, some of which have to be tackled twice.
Graphics and sound are superlative, and although it's fairly easy, it's playable enough to complete time and again. Another great platform game starring Walt Disney's little mouse!

PRINCE OF PERSIA — 93%
DOMARK £29.99 Tel 081 780 2222
Leap chasm and spikes, dive through razor-sharp shutters, activate pressure pads and duel with guards — when you find the scimitar. You've an hour to negotiate 12 levels and rescue the princess waiting for you. Animation is jaw-droppingly good and the task is addictive. This is one platform game with a difference.

SHADOW OF THE BEAST — 70%
TECMAGIK £34.99 Tel 071 243 2878
Once human, The Beast traverses scrolling plains and vast caverns to find and defeat his loathed master. Keys, potions and weapons are collected, although fists are most often used to defeat many enemies. Neat graphic touches and increased adventure elements make it better than the MD version but gameplay lacks versatility.

SPIDER-MAN 2 — 82%
FLYING EDGE £29.99 Tel 0962 877788
Spidey's up against six of his toughest foes in six two-part levels. Objects need to be found and used to gain access to villains' bases. Graphics and sound are nothing special but gameplay's great. If you're a fan of Spidey and his amazing adventures, this game is for you.

WONDERBOY 3 IN MONSTER WORLD — 75%
SEGA £32.99 Tel 071 373 3000
From the original arcade machine comes this cool platform romp. Wonderboy's set a number of tasks that eventually enable him to escape. There are traps to dodge, obstacles to

jump and monsters to kill, plus plenty of people and objects to interact with.
Although not as popular as Sonic, Wonderboy's adventures are still fun to play.

Platformers

Conquer villains and strange lands in leaps and bounds. A range of styles is represented here, from the craggy strategy of Chuck Rock to the eco-friendly gook of Global Gladiators.

ALEX KIDD HI TEK WORLD 78%
SEGA £29.99 Tel 071 373 3000
The most popular MS character after Sonic, Alex Kidd faces some tough challenges in Hi Tek World. Fast platform action and cute graphics make this one a winner.

BONANZA BROS 76%
SEGA £29.99 Tel 071 373 3000
As Robo (his bro's gone missing in this version), break into buildings, collect swag and shoot or stun guards. A cash-grabbing sub-level adds depth to this wacky coin-op conversion, which features unusual Lego People graphics.

CHUCK ROCK 91%
VIRGIN £32.99 Tel 081 960 2255
Caveman capers as this ugly thug uses his belly against five levels of dinosaurs. Chuck Rock also chuck rocks! Vertical and leftward sections and puzzle elements help make this one of the most playable MS platform games.

CHUCK ROCK II: SON OF CHUCK 91%
CORE DESIGN £29.99
Tel: 0332 297797
Visually stunning platform game, packed with great gameplay. The visuals in this adventure are fantastic, with cool animation. The levels are challenging and the bosses have unique attack patterns. You just have to play this game.

CRASH DUMMIES 84%
ACCLAIM £29.99 Tel 071 344 5000
A great game starring those Incredible Crash Dummies. Dive from a tall building, smash up a new car, do a spot of bomb disposal and go for a ski. The Dummies have to test out all these things to earn themselves money for a vacation. A great game.

GLOBAL GLADIATORS 86%
VIRGIN £32.99 Tel 081 960 2255
The game from a McDonalds licence and it's packed with brilliant graphics and platform action. The difficulty is set quite high so be prepared for quite a challenging game. You'd be a fool to miss it.

HOME ALONE 61%
SEGA £29.99 Tel 071 373 3000
Poor old Kevin's been abandoned by his parents and has to defend his house from two bungling burglars. Puzzle solving and platform action make Home Alone a decent game.

JAMES BOND: THE DUEL 84%
DOMARK £34.99 Tel 081 780 2222
One of 007's worst enemies has kidnapped Prof Jones. First on a tanker, Bond finds hostages and bomb parts then tackles Jaws. Crisp graphics, realistic animation and four tough levels make Bond's mission a success.

THE FLASH 90%
SEGA £29.99 Tel 071 373 3000
DC Comics' character zooms onto the Master System with one of the most enjoyable platform games around. Loads of levels, tricky bad guys and Sonic-type speeds make this an essential purchase. If you're a fan of the comic books or decent platformers, this is for you.

THE LUCKY DIME CAPER 78%
SEGA £32.99 Tel 071 373 3000
Donald's platform-hopped adventures take him around the world, using a mallet and frisbee to oust nasties. Graphics are gaudy and gameplay's a little frustrating, but superb cartoon sprites and playability save the day.

THE NEW ZEALAND STORY 93%
TECMAGIK £32.99 Tel 0924 461115
Tiki the kiwi explores large platform levels, armed with bow and bombs and travelling by foot, floating board, balloon, duck and underwater. Stunning arcade-like graphics and frustratingly addictive gameplay with lots of secret rooms to discover. One of the Top Ten MS games.

NINJA GAIDEN 90%
SEGA £32.99 Tel 071 373 3000
Ryu Hayabusa! That's you (that is) as you jump pits, climb trees, leap from girder to girder and dodge the odd throwing star or three. A great challenge and with controls, graphics and effects this good, you're sure to want to take it up.

RAINBOW ISLANDS 91%
SEGA £32.99 TEL 071 373 3000
As cute Bub, make your way up vertical islands, using rainbows as bridges and weapons. They take time to master but then gameplay bites in this appropriately colourful game. Already a hit on home computers, Rainbow Islands is a blast on the Master System

ROBOCOD 93%
US GOLD £34.99 Tel: 021 625 3366
A perfect conversion of the hit Mega Drive game. The graphics and sound are out of this world and there are so many varied levels with secret bits and pieces you'll never want to stop playing. This is a great example of what the Master System's capable of.

RUNNING BATTLE 69%
SEGA £29.99 Tel 071 373 3000
Using fists, feet and pick-up weapons, kill M's soldiers while marching through predictable streets and bases. Detailed but flickery sprites, long but repetitive levels. Appropriately, the player character's called Sergeant Gray...

SHADOW DANCER 62%
SEGA £32.99 Tel 071 373 3000
Takashi and his hound take on the Asian Dawn terrorists, the former with shuriken throwing stars and magic, the latter with, um, teeth. Mediocre backgrounds pay the price for detailed sprites. Controls are awkward and gameplay unforgiving.

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 94%
SEGA £29.99 Tel 071 373 3000
Unbelievably, MS Sonic is almost identical to the MD. Fast, smooth scrolling and detailed sprites (especially Sonic himself) are a visual feast. Although easy, the gameplay — collect rings, bounce on baddies, race through levels — is addictive enough to keep you coming back to complete it again and again.

SONIC 2 92%
SEGA £34.99 Tel 071 373 3000
Sonic hang-glides, bounces across water, floats in bubbles and bashes through blocks to secret areas — as well as running fast and collecting rings, of course. It requires more thought and is more varied than the original but not quite so playable.

STAR WARS 89%
US GOLD £34.99
Tel: 021 625 3366
An excellent conversion from one of the best sci-fi films of all time. All the movie's music has been included to create a good game-playing atmosphere. All the levels have great backgrounds and sprites and there's lots to see and do.

TAZ-MANIA 71%
SEGA £34.99 Tel 071 371 3000
Taz searches for legendary birds and their yummy eggs. Warner Bros cartoon graphics really make this game. Although a touch easy, its originality and character make it fun.

WOLFCHILD 82%
VIRGIN £32.99 Tel: 081 960 2255
A challenging platform adventure — most players will find it on the difficult side. It follows the story of a guy who walks through a matter-mutator and discovers he has super-human strength whenever there's a full moon! Lots of secret passageways and detailed backdrops.

Puzzle

Pure thought and deductive reasoning (almost) replace fancy graphics — with the exception of Krusty's winning cartoon sprites and Trivial Pursuit super host.

KLAX 81%
TENGEN/DOMARK £29.99 Tel 081 780 2222
Catch and flip coloured tiles to form lines of the same colour. Graphics are drab but no worries because this simple but remarkably playable hundred-level puzzler doesn't need flashy visuals.

KRUSTY'S FUN HOUSE 86%
FLYING EDGE £34.99 Tel 0962 877788
Position blocks, tube sections and fans to direct dumb rats, while using custard pies to kill patrolling enemies. Mind-scrambling puzzles, madcap platform action and hidden rooms to find. Remarkably MD-like. If you're a fan of the Simpsons then you'll love this.

LEMMINGS 93%
SEGA £34.99 Tel 071 373 3000
Use limited numbers of digging, tunneling, bridge-building, climbing and floating lemmings to overcome obstacles. Loads of levels and tough yet incredibly addictive gameplay make Lemmings unmissable.

TRIVIAL PURSUIT 79%
DOMARK £32.99 Tel 081 780 2222
Almost everyone knows this board game. The board graphic's simple but clear and the question master is excellently drawn and animated. Easy to play and plenty of questions.

Racing

Hands on the steering, pedal to the metal. Jostle for position and lean into those corners. Swear when computer cars cut you up and steal the lead...

CHASE HQ 69%
SEGA £29.99 Tel 071 373 3000
Take to the highways of America as you race at high speed to catch villainous criminals. Road scrolling is smooth but a lack of originality makes this game dull after a while.

F1 69%
DOMARK £29.99
Tel: 081 780 2222
Below-average racing game with nothing special to offer speed-freaks. The visuals are dull and some are really bad — you could say they're the pits!

OUTRUN EUROPA 87%
US GOLD £29.99 Tel 021 625 3366
A racing game with bells on! Take the controls of a motorbike, jetski and Porsche in an attempt to retrieve some secret plans. Put your foot down, avoid obstacles and punch or shoot any-

one who bothers you! Fast, flicker-free graphics and a real challenge.

SCI 60%
SEGA £32.99 071 373 3000
The sequel to Chase HQ, you track down criminals' cars then shoot the hell out of them. The pics between levels are good but the road doesn't match the speed of your vehicle. It's fun for a while — it would be much better if you could blast civilians' cares, too — but there are too few levels.

SUPER MONACO GRAND PRIX 2 86%
SEGA £34.99 Tel 071 373 3000
The action takes place over 16 world championship courses and the aim's to whup Ayrton Senna's ass. Although backgrounds are dull, scrolling's fast and the car handles well. It's tough but fun and the password system's a big help. For pure road racing, it can't be beaten.

Shoot-'em-ups

Whether aboard a space ship or plane, or running along as a future soldier, robot or cop, blasters have as many victims as they do fans. Old Arnie's Terminator's your best bet, with Alien Storm, Alien 3 and Super Space Invaders following just behind. Have a blast!

ALIEN STORM 77%
SEGA £29.99 Tel 071 373 3000
Gordon and his flame-thrower or Slammer and his electric whip fry aliens. The action switches to through the hero's eyes on alternate levels, where crosshairs aim a gun. A little thought's required and graphics are imaginative (if flickery). A two-player option would've bolstered it.

ALIEN 3 77%
SEGA £34.99 Tel 071 373 3000
This time, Ripley's stranded on a prison planet with assorted thieves and killers — poor lass! Loads of Aliens have stuck hostages to walls. Explore four-way scrolling levels to rescue 'em, using a variety of limited ammo weapons and air ducts as short cuts. Neat presentation, well shaded backgrounds and 'orrible Aliens make mediocre gameplay fun.

G-LOC 67%
SEGA £29.99 Tel 071 373 3000
Action's viewed through the Thunderfox's cockpit but it's strictly shoot-'em-up. Armed with cannons and guided missiles, ammo's replenished and the jet updated between levels of fighter-downing fun.
Only half the screen's actively used and it ain't pretty, but there's sufficient action and sensation of movement for a few missions. This game doesn't really live up to it's arcade machine original.

POWER STRIKE 2 71%
SEGA £29.99 Tel 071 373 3000
A vertically scrolling shooter with tons of power-ups to collect and many an enemy to dispose of. Graphics are a little flickery and the main sprite can be hard to spot but the difficulty setting will keep you playing for ages.

PREDATOR 2 68%
ACCLAIM £32.99 Tel 0962 877788
As cop Mike Harrigan, march along, blasting drug dealers, collecting weapons, destroying drugs and rescuing hostages. Suitably dark, moody graphics accompany this toughie — which gets harder when the Predator shows up! Not bad but frustrating and unexciting.

ROBOCOP 3 55%
ACCLAIM £29.99 Tel 071 344 5000
As with all the Robocop 3 games on every format this has lousy gameplay. The graphics look good though even though Robo's feet are the only part of him that moves!

SUPER SPACE INVADERS 87%
DOMARK/TENGEN £29.99 Tel 081 780 2222
The revamped relic features colourful backgrounds, various Invader attacks and massive mother ships. Meaty sounds, super-simple controls, 12 levels (plus cattle-saving bonus sections) and simultaneous two-player all somehow make it a good buy.

THE TERMINATOR 90%
VIRGIN £32.99 Tel 081 960 2255
Part man, part machine, all c– er, Arnie's first blockbuster movie hits the 8-bit! But you're the good guy, sent from the future to protect Sarah Connor from the T-800 robot. Fast, hectic levels tax your reflexes and trigger finger — there are only five of 'em put this is no pushover! Dark, moody graphics and digitised level intros set the scene brilliantly.

Sport

Football fans are well catered for but there's something for those who prefer to use a club or racket, too. The multi-event, multi-player laighs of Olympic Gold are hard to beat.

ANDRE AGASSI TENNIS 67%
TECMAGIK £32.99 Tel 071 243 2878
The famous tennis star comes to the Master System with a fair simulation of the grand sport. Graphics are quite good but the game is let down by its speed and the control of the players. Not a total disaster.

CHAMPIONS OF EUROPE 81%
TECMAGIK £32.99 Tel 071 243 2878
Variable game length, direction of play, wind-speed, weather conditions and eight referees set the scene. A map of Europe, 34 teams to choose, computer or human opponent... Controls take time to get used but are highly versatile. Playable and humorous, cute sprites 'speaking' via speech bubbles.

EVANDER HOLYFIELD BOXING 78%
SEGA £29.99 Tel 071 373 3000
Customise your boxer, train him then hop in the ring and bash his opponent! Versatile yet easy to use controls, large boxers and realistic controls bring the thrill of the ring home.

PGA TOUR GOLF 79%
TENGEN £34.99
Tel: 0604 790785
A good attempt at the tricky sport of golf. Lots of greenery but what do you expect? The 3D-style views draw quickly and the golfer's well animated. There are multiple option screens so you can customise the game to your heart's content.

OLYMPIC GOLD 94%
US GOLD £34.99 Tel 021 625 3366
The 100m, hurdles, hammer, archery, pole vault, swimming, springboard diving can be played individually, with a selection of others or all events, and there's a special Olympic Records option. Some events' controls are easy, others are tricky to master, but they're all responsive to your commands. Crisp sprites, good sounds and up to four players round off the best multi-event sports cart.

SLAP SHOT 62%
SEGA £29.99 Tel 071 373 3000
With Electronic Arts coming up with great sports games like NHLPA Hockey, you'd think that the Sega 8 bit machine might benefit from a decent hockey game. Think again! Poor graphics and unresponsive controls make this a dreadful sports game.

SPEEDBALL 2 78%
VIRGIN £34.99 Tel 081 960 2255
In a scrolling high-tech arena, teams battle it out for possession of a metal ball. Bouncing it off stars and domes earns points. Collect coins to improve individual player's attributes or the team as a whole. Speedball 2's manic gameplay make it one of the best two-player sports games.

SUPER KICK OFF 90%
US GOLD £29.99 Tel 021 625 3366
Not much to look at — plain green pitch viewed from above and small, dull footballer sprites. But scrolling's smooth, animation's good and playability's high! It takes time to adjust to the free-running ball then offers endless hours of fun, particularly with two players.

TENNIS ACE 72%
SEGA £29.99 Tel 071 373 3000
Wimbledon's out of the way but there's plenty of lawn-based fun to be had in Tennis Ace! An unusual playing angle and plenty of options ensure you'll have weeks of fun.

ULTIMATE SOCCER 90%
SEGA £34.99 Tel: 071 373 3000
If there's only one soccer game in your collection, this should be it! It's the frantic action of the two-player mode that makes it worthwhile. There are lots of menu screens to cater for every soccer fan's tastes, too. The ultimate soccer game!

WIMBLEDON TENNIS 82%
SEGA £29.99 Tel 071 373 3000
Take a shufty at the speed, skill and power ratings of the 16 players available before committing yourself and going to court! Play a single match, the tournament series or
two-player head-to-head game. Court graphics are simple but scrolling's smooth and sprites are clear. Simple controls,
plenty of challenge and playabilty. A good simulation of the strawberries and cream game!

WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD 79%
US GOLD £29.99 Tel 021 625 3366
An initially confusing but versatile hook/slice meter controls the strokes across four full golf courses. Three skill levels, wind conditions, uneven surfaces, bunkers, rough and water hazards... pretty comprehensive. Graphics are fairly crude but it plays well.

WORLD TOURNAMENT GOLF 78%
SEGA £29.99 Tel 071 373 3000
Not quite up to the standard of World Class Leaderboard but a great golfing game anyway. A ton of options enables players to select courses, clubs and more. Up to seven players can take part in one game enabling challenges to be set up and lengthier games to be played.

Strategy

If you're the type who likes to think and plan before they act, strategy games are for you. Unfortunately, you've only two to choose from at the moment, so it won't take long to decide which to buy first!

RAMPART 80%
DOMARK/TENGEN £29.99 Tel 081 780 2222
A curious mixture of strategic shoot-'em-up and puzzler, your aim is to build up a castle. First use a cannon sight to defend it from invading ships then rotate geometric shapes to repair its walls. The combination works very well, particularly in two-player mode, where sneaky tactics and successful moves are incredibly satisfying. Don't miss this unrecognised winner.

SEGA CHESS 93%
SEGA £34.99 Tel 071 373 3000
The greatest strategy game of all time. And the Master System's lucky enough to have a computer chess cart that's up there with the best of 'em. Sega Chess gives two viewpoints, nine skill levels, a spread of options and user-friendly controls. Graphics and sound are weak but who cares, it's chess!

We update the Master Market every issue to keep you up to date with the latest releases. Remember — if it's not here, it's not worth playing!


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WIN! WIN! WIN! 10 COPIES OF THE AMAZING NEW VIRGIN GAME!

JOLLY JUNGLE JAPES!

To coincide with the release of Walt Disney's classic animated adventure ***The Jungle Book*** this Christmas Virgin thought they would create a console game based on the charming adventures of Mowgli and friends. Almost everyone in the console industry thought the game would be disappointing after the dreadful conversions of other classic tales onto the console. Luckily Virgin gave everyone a pleasant surprise!

The Master System and Game Gear versions of the game are simply excellent, as you can tell by reading the review on page 60. The animation is smooth and all the visuals are perfectly converted from the classic Walt Disney characters. They all make great console stars — Mowgli, Baloo, King Louie and the rest of the gang. Of course no Jungle Book game would be complete without the brilliant songs that went hand in hand with the movie. And yes! They've been converted to the Master System and Game Gear too! You can sing along to such classics as 'I'm the King of the swinger zoo, a jungle V.I.P.' or 'The Bare Necessities' while you play.

Banana-rama!

The game will eventually be released on the Mega Drive too but Virgin decided not to release it at the same time as the 8-bit versions because of the success of their amazing *Aladdin* on the 16-bit Sega.

If you're a Master System owner then this is where you get all excited! We've got 10 copies of the excellent *Jungle Book* to give away to you! All you've got to do is write in and tell us what sort of prickly fruit Baloo sings to Mowgli about in the song 'Bare Necessities'. Put your answer on a postcard and send it off to: ***Jungle Compo, Sega Force Special, Impact Magazines, Temeside, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1JW.***

A copy of this charming game could be on it's way to you!

James Pon

James Pond has been the star of many console games and this is his latest offering. He started out life in a simple Amiga game but shot to fame on the Mega Drive with *James Pond Codename: Robocod*. This game has gone on to be a hit on all Sega formats.

When Pond destroyed the dastardly Dr Maybe's fiendish plot to take over the world in his last adventure, the madcap scientist vowed to get his revenge. His criminal intelligence hatches a new plan — to corner the world cheese market by mining the moon's rich veins of the whiffy stuff. All he needs is an army of dumb but loyal followers to exploit. After placing an advert in the Vermin Times, offering more cheese than they'll know what to do with, he gains a willing force of rodent warriors from Rat City. The secret agency, F.I.5.H, uncovers his plans and sends Pond to save Earth yet again.

East of Edam!

Pond begins by battling through the many platformed levels of the moon's surface. Initially, his quest is to reach the Edam mine on the east side of the moon. Along the way, his objectives are to rescue the F.I.5.H agents captured by Maybe's bewhiskered army and destroy the cheese mines, before the whole scheme can be put into operation. To complete each level, Pond seeks out Dr. Maybe's communication beacons and annihilates them before they relay information back to the dotty Doctor's moon-headquarters.

The moon surface has many surprises in store for Pond. It's a terrain that only a supreme athlete can overcome, but Pond makes a fairly decent job of it! He has extra speed in his boots to scale the many huge mountains that cover the lunar landscape, but watch out coming down the other side. Pick up too much momentum and our favourite special agent will run into a whole heap of Maybe-induced mayhem. The Doctor's given his ratty forces plenty of weapons to keep Pond on his toes and they're not averse to using them. They'll hurl bombs at him, use their armour to injure him and ambush Pond at every opportunity.





James Pond – Cheese dancer extraordinaire!

...nd 3

(Left) Use the volcano tubes to get shot high into the air.

(Right) Grab the apple gun from one of the bears to gain a powerful fruity firearm.

(Right) In later levels the rats fire eggs from their tanks, watch out when they hatch!

(Below) James isn't jumping for joy, just kicks!

What would a platform game be without the inevitable swinging platforms?

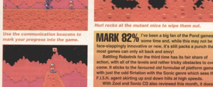
It's all an uphill struggle for James (the upwardly mobile fish!)

Shut your eyes and count to ten.

He flies through the air with the greatest of ease!

Use the communication beacons to mark your progress into the game.

Hurl rocks at the mutant mice to wipe them out.



MARK 82% I've been a big fan of the Pond games for some time and, while this may not be face-slappingly innovative or new, it's still packs a punch that most games can only sit back and envy!

Battling Robotnik for the third time has its fair share of action, with all of the levels and rather tricky obstacles to overcome. It sticks to the favoured old formulae of platform games with just the odd flirtation with the Sonic genre which sees the F.I.S.H. agent skirting up and down hills at high speeds.

With Zool and Sonic CD also reviewed this month, it does seem that platformers are spoilt for choice. My moneys on James Pond 3 — Licensed to gill and licensed to thrill!

"I'm on top of the world Ma".



You must remember that mice can't read the Highway Code.

Pond power

Luckily for us, Pond isn't the F.I.5.H agency's top operative for nothing. He's a master of all the martial arts — check out his mean left hook for starters, and with leaping powers like his, it's not surprising he's often mistaken for a flying fish!

On top of this, Pond can speak over a dozen languages, including dolphin, crab and even shark. How this will come in handy is anyone's guess but it's nice to know!

F.I.5.H agents have left a number of weapons dotted around. These include a parachute umbrella that breaks long falls, dynamite to blow up even the hardiest rodent and bombs to remove irritating objects.

Ponds contacted by Admiral Nelson, founder of F.I.5.H, through beacons provided by other agents. It's important to take notice of what the old sea-dog, has to say. He makes life a lot easier by warning of impending danger and advising how it can be overcome.

There are loads of levels and teasers to overcome. Pond's got his hands full in this one; let's all pray that he doesn't end up as fish fingers on the Captain's table! ■



Here he is, your arch enemy Dr. Maybe — Boo Hiss etc!

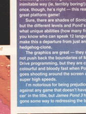


STIX 84% I'd never had the pleasure of playing a Pond game before, although I'd heard Marc enthusing about the games in his own inimitable way (ie, terribly boring!). For once, though, he's right — this really is a great platform game!

Sure, there are shades of *Sonic* here, but the different levels and Pond's somewhat unique abilities (how many fish do you know who can speak 12 languages?) make this a departure from just another hedgehog-clone.

The graphics are great — they may not push back the boundaries of Mega Drive programming, but they are clear, colourful and bloody fast when Pond goes shooting around the screen at super high speeds.

I'm notorious for being prejudice against any game that doesn't have 'soccer' in the title, but *James Pond 3* has gone some way to redressing the balance.





(Above) James' map is better than a plain ordanance survey.

(Right) You can kill Astronauts with a blow to the head.



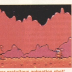
James checks out the local flora and fauna.

(Above) Pond's anti-gravity boots are much better than Nikes.

(Left) Members of the F.I.5.H. team are always on hand to give advice.



Serious moonboots — Or what?



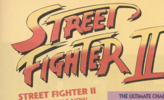
Another gratuitous animation shot!

James Pond 3	
EA	
£44.99	83
80	Graphics
75	Sound
89	Playability
86	Lastability

A thoroughbred amongst platformers. Pond 3 is licensed to thrill!

Platform

☎ 0753 549442



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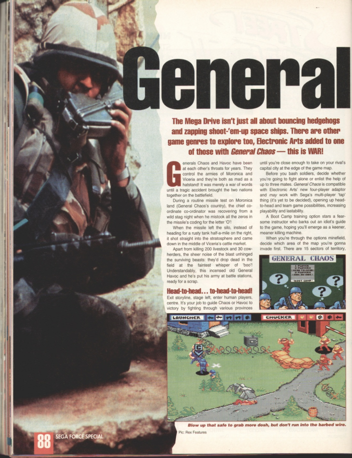
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General

The Mega Drive isn't just all about bouncing hedgehogs and zapping shoot-'em-up space ships. There are other game genres to explore too, Electronic Arts added to one of those with *General Chaos* — this is WAR!

Generals Chaos and Havoc have been at each other's throats for years. They control the armies of Moronica and Viceria and they're both as mad as a hatstand! It was merely a war of words until a tragic accident brought the two nations together on the battlefield.

During a routine missile test on Moronica land (General Chaos's country), the chief co-ordinate co-ordinator was recovering from a wild stag night when he mistook all the zeros in the missile's coding for the letter 'O'!

When the missile left the silo, instead of heading for a rusty tank half-a-mile on the right, it shot straight into the stratosphere and came down in the middle of Viceria's cattle market.

Apart from killing 200 livestock and 30 cow-herders, the sheer noise of the blast unhinged the surviving beasts: they'd drop dead in the field at the faintest whisper of 'boo'! Understandably, this incensed old General Havoc and he's put his army at battle stations, ready for a scrap.

Head-to-head... to-head-to-head!

Exit storyline, stage left, enter human players, centre. It's your job to guide Chaos or Havoc to victory by fighting through various provinces until you're close enough to take on your rival's capital city at the edge of the game map.

Before you bash soldiers, decide whether you're going to fight alone or enlist the help of up to three mates. *General Chaos* is compatible with Electronic Arts' new four-player adaptor and may work with Sega's multi-player 'tap' thing (it's yet to be decided), opening up head-to-head and team game possibilities, increasing playability and lastability.

A Boot Camp training option stars a fear-some instructor who barks out an idiot's guide to the game, hoping you'll emerge as a keener, meaner killing machine.

When you're through the options minefield, decide which area of the map you're gonna invade first. There are 15 sectors of territory,

Blow up that safe to grab more dosh, but don't run into the barbed wire.

Pic: Rex Features



Chaos

with comical names such as Slimebog Hollow and Near the Supply Depot (most chuckle-some...), but they're not just named for laughs (good job).

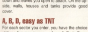
If a creek or bog's mentioned, your battle-field contains water or mud, which slows you down and leaves you open to attack. On the up-side, walls, houses and tanks provide good cover.

A, B, D, easy as TNT

For each sector you enter, you have the choice of three five-man teams — Assault, Brute Force and Demolition — and a Commando duo, all of whom use various combinations of machine guns, grenades, bazookas, TNT and flame-throwers.

Five-man outfits are controlled via a 'point and click' interface: select a soldier with [C], move the cursor to the desired spot and press the magic [B] button. Your little man runs to stand where you clicked. When you press [A], all your soldiers fire and, depending upon the range and power of their weapons, you hit an enemy or miss and leave yourself open to attack.

Since there are only two men in a Commando team, you have direct control over them. They're still moved one at a time but pressing [B] calls the other soldier to join ▶











To boost points, Chaos's team should bomb Havoc's water tower.





The team selection screen; each side has a selection from five weapons.

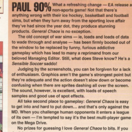
The 'C' and 'H' pointers set the position of each soldier.

The reds attack the blue's city. Gang warfare at its best!

Here they are, the main men, Generals Havoc and Chaos. The latter barks out instructions at Boot Camp (below).

Down at Boot Camp





PAUL 90% What a refreshing change — EA release a non-sports game! Not that there's anything wrong with their ice hockey, basketball and football sims, but when they turn away from the sporting love affair they've had since the year dot, they produce stunning products. *General Chaos* is no exception.

The old concept of war sims — ie, loads and loads of data to wade through and analyse — has been firmly booted out of the window to be replaced by funny, furious addictive gameplay which has lead to many a reprimand from our beloved Managing Editor. Still, what does Steve know? He's a *Sensible Soccer* saddo!

Judging by the screenshots, you can be forgiven for a lack of enthusiasm. Graphics aren't the game's strongest point but they're adequate and the action doesn't slow down or become confusing when there are sprites dashing all over the screen. The sound, however, is excellent, with loads of speech samples and good use of spot effects.

All take second place to gameplay: *General Chaos* is easy to get into and hard to put down... and that's only against the MD. When you challenge human opponents it enters a league of its own — I'm tempted to say it's the best multi-player game on the Mega Drive.

No prizes for guessing I love *General Chaos* to bits. If you don't buy it, you're as mad as a hatter.

MD review

▶ his buddy.

These controls take some getting used to — it's confusing to direct five independent sprites in the heat of battle — but a few skirmishes in Gasoline Valley should be enough to suss it.

Casualty and combat

Now you've got the basics, you feel more at ease, don't you? And you'll feel even better knowing that medics can be called to revive seriously injured soldiers.

The bad news is that they're limited in number and when you run out, weak soldiers are goners unless you earn sufficient points for another medic, *fast.* Points are awarded for injuring enemies and completing special missions which flash up on soldier selection screens.

Occasionally, two opposing soldiers meet face to face and disappear in cloud of smoke and thrashing limbs.

When the dust settles, they use punch, kick and block moves to drain each other's energy and preserve their own. Fisticuffs specialists beware: when opponents are down to their last segment of energy, they sometimes pull out a concealed pistol...

A sector's won when a team's wiped out. The victor chooses an adjacent piece of territory and battles rage until Chaos or Havoc's forces reach and conquer the other's capital.

Electronic Arts' *General Chaos* is a new breed of war game and a huge step away from the usual strategy sim. It's not the most realistic or historically-correct game of the genre but it's definitely the funniest. ■

ADE 85% Electronic Arts are renowned for quality software. A lot of it's sporting games and, as you're probably aware, I'm not a sports nut. So when EA slip out of the genre, I readily sit up and take note.

General Chaos is definitely worth a look. What makes this one so classy is it's radically different to anything I've seen on the MD to date and, what's more, it plays like a dream — you'll be hooked in five minutes.

As Paul says, don't expect stunning visuals — characters are relatively tiny — but you soon forget that when you become embroiled in the chaos. It's action all the way as you blast, blast, maim and blast.

There's a terrific humour element throughout. You can't help but giggle as opponents are spiked or blown to smithereens.

Controls are easy to master: there are no fiddly menus or awkward moves so you're soon racing around, admiring the results of your handiwork. Sound is good, with a few tunes and, of course, plenty of explosion FX.

General Chaos makes *such* a change from run-of-the-mill war sims. There's nothing else like it on the Mega Drive, so if being big and macho and blowing things up is your thing, you shouldn't miss this terrific game.

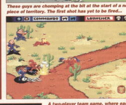
Map attack







These guys are chomping at the bit at the start of a new piece of territory. The first shot has yet to be fired...



A two-player team game, where each player controls two commandos. Looks like the reds are taking a hammering.

The spoils of war. General Chaos prepares the battle report.

In Close Combat, punch, kick and block moves come to the fore. The reds hang on by the skin of their teeth.

Havoc favours a Chucker in this battle. These guys are nifty with grenades.

General Chaos

EA

£44.99

Score	Category
78	Graphics
84	Sound
89	Playability
93	Lastability

88

A unique, addictive game, made even better by a four-player option

Strategy

☎ 0758 549442



MD review

Already a folk-hero to the computer-using fraternity, Dizzy finally scrambles his way onto the Mega Drive. The Codie's fought long and hard against the might of Sega to ensure their hero's independence, finally proving victorious earlier in the year. Riddled with yokes and egged on by his family. Dizzy sets off into the overcrowded platform scene, yet was it worth the wait?

Fantastic

Life's not easy when you're a small, unassuming egg. Just ask poor old Dizzy. Not only has the evil wizard Zaks egg-napped his girlfriend Daisy, but Dizzy also has to solve the rest of his family's problems, so now he's going to have to leave the safety of the Yolksfolks' treehouse village and venture forth on a treacherous mission to ultimately save the egg of his dreams.

The game opens in Dizzy's house. Once you have collected the door key and left this tranquil haven, you will have to contend with all types of nasty woodland creatures hell-bent on cracking Dizzy's brittle shell. These range from huge spiders that scuttle down on Dizzy from the trees to seemingly harmless animals such as butterflies and snails, although, in this case, appearances can be deceptive.

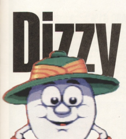
It's no yoke!

The object of the game is to negotiate the obstacles that impede Dizzy's every move. To do this, items scattered around the egg-headed adventurer's world have to be collected in a specific order to complete each individual task, the ultimate goal being to allow Dizzy to travel further into the uncharted realms of his world in search of the key that will rescue his beloved girlfriend.

Throughout Dizzy's arduous journey there are many different landscapes and sections to overcome. He must pass safely through a graveyard, overcome a barren desert and swim

To get into town you have to pass this nasty looking hog. Maybe if you had something to feed him..?

Dizzy





You'll need a snorkel to find the sunken treasure otherwise Dizzy will disappear in a sticky, gooey mess.



Welcome to Dizzy's tranquil home and the beginning of his epic quest.

Left: Watch out for the egg eating plants and sinister widlife

Bottom Left: Find the spanner and cramp up this machine to progress into the mines

a hazardous underwater section. He must also collect items from a huge pirate ship - get too close to the pirates and Dizzy will be forced to walk the plank, plunging our unlikely oval hero down into Davy Jones' locker!

Keeping it in the family

Along the way Dizzy must rescue the rest of his family, as each member has something that will aid him in his quest. This is easier said than done, as they all have their own peculiar problem. Denzil has been frozen in a block of ice, Dylan refuses to help unless his pet Poogie is returned, while Grand Dizzy is on his last legs and desperately needs his medicine. All of their woes must be soothed before they will give Dizzy the vital equipment that he needs.

Dizzy always needs a little extra help, which comes in the shape of a kindly wizened old sorcerer. Find the magic scroll to enter his world, solve the puzzle before the egg-timer sand runs out and an extra life is yours.

Fantastic Dizzy is already an extremely popular game on other systems. The question is will it succeed on the M.D. or will we all be left with egg on our faces?!



CHRIS 68% Take one small, yet perfectly formed egg; hard-boil; then throw into a huge platform game with loads of objects to collect. God, how frustrating!

Fantastic Dizzy is a game that requires an analytical mind and loads of patience. Unfortunately I have neither, which led to a slight altercation between man and machine! Basically it's just not my cup of char.

Having said that there are millions of gamers out there who love this kind of problem-solving platform game. My message to them is Fantastic Dizzy would probably be right up your street. It features some really cute sprites, a 'lovable' central character and plenty of scope for those who like a strong vein of logic running through their games. Thus a door needs a key, but to get the key you have to bribe a guard, leap from tree to tree and cross a river. Now, where's that plank of wood?!

As you may have guessed I just don't like this type of game. I'm sure this will be a huge success, but I'd prefer a nice omelette!





Dizzy - Our hero. An all round good egg who has to carry the woes of the rest of the yolksfolk on his soulders




Denzil - Denzil as cool as they come, rarely seen without his shades. Now he is now frozen in a block of ice. Dizzy will have to find the straw near his house and a box of matches to thaw him out.

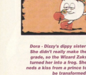


Daisy - The only girl for Dizzy. A fine example of the perfect egg; smooth white shell, aristocratic yolk running in her veins, which is exactly why the wizard Zaks wants her hard boiled.



Grand Dizzy - Age has taken its toll on poor old Grand Dizzy and his fragile shell needs nourishment. Dizzy must collect the medicine bottle, mushroom and plant in order to save him.



Dylon - No not the hippy rabbit from the magic roundabout, but this egg looks just as stoned. Dylons got sme bad vibes at the moment because his pet Poogies gone missing.



Dora - Dizzy's dippy sister. She didn't really make the grade, so the Wizard Zaks turned her into a frog. She neds a kiss from a prince to be transformed.

Dozy - Dozy is lazy enough ay the best of times, but now hes been sent into an eternal sleep. He can only be woken if Dizzy clashes the cymbals near him.

MARC 61% I would not really describe Fantastic *Dizzy* as fantastic despite the title - 'average' would be more appropriate! The game has some very cute graphics, although the effects are a bit on the thin side, while guiding Dizzy around such a huge landscape with so little seemingly going on can be tedious to the extreme.

The game is huge and it's certainly not lacking in depth - what it is lacking in, though, is addictiveness, so, despite the large play area and the many puzzles, there is not really a great urge to play on. It isn't as if it is over difficult or anything, it's more that everything seems so long winded in order to solve a 'puzzle' that you soon become bored with Dizzy's antics and lack of action.

Let's be quite honest, though (yes, lets — Mark)— this is a good conversion of the original, so if you found Dizzy to be to your liking on the Speccy or similar then you will no doubt enjoy this version.



If you find spice the scroll you'll have to solve this simple puzzle



Double yolker! Solve the puzzle and Dizzy splits in two to give you an extra life.



Fantastic Dizzy

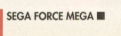
Codemasters
£39.99

72	Graphics
59	Sound
62	Playability
60	Lastability

64

A successful format on other machines but it doesn't really compare well to the better Mega Drive platformers.

Out: October ☎0926 814132





Davis Cup World

SEGA FORCE MEGA Recommended

The tennis market has had its traditional summer boom, *Amazing Tennis* and *Andre Agassi Tennis* appearing in the past couple of months. But now Domark are to put those *and* earlier offerings to shame.

While most tennis tournaments offer singles and doubles titles, men's, women's and mixed, the Davis Cup has made its name with a curious and inventive mixture. A player's set against another, then their team-mates play each other. Finally, a doubles match decides the winning team. Unusual, but fun.

Naturally, Domark's game majors on the Davis Cup option, a single player teaming up with the computer or a second player then tackling a computer duo or human-computer team. A knockout championship, players are whittled down till the best four players face each other. The same goes for Tournaments, except either all singles or all doubles matches are played.

Championship mode's a lot more complicated: becoming a jet-setting tennis pro from the west coast of America, your sponsors start you off with $20,000 to spend on training and tournaments worldwide. Passwords are used to put your career on indefinite, non-harmful hold, while Go to Next Week accelerates time to a hopefully profitable event.

Conversely, Exhibition's dead simple: a one-off singles or doubles match, a wodge of cash the reward for victory.

Perfect practice

It's a pleasant surprise that there are more practice options than modes of play, although a ball machine usually takes precedence. The Practice mode itself features the ball machine and an inset picture of a joypad, highlighting the button and D-pad presses you make. Precision's similar except a particular section of the court is marked with an arrow. Hitting it earns a point, increasing accuracy over time.

The ball machine goes but Precision arrow stays for the self-explanatory Service, while ball after ball's pumped your way in Speed — you certainly have to be fast to reach the target of 20 consecutive returns. Finally, Balls is essentially volley practice, play alternating between two characters for single points.

Okay, you've tweaked your technique for all its worth, now enter one of the matches we were talking about earlier. Choose a hard, indoor, clay or grass court, best of one, three or five sets and your skill setting (Beginner, Amateur or Professional), which affects speed and manoeuvrability.

No contest?

Choose one of the top 50 players — from CJ Welch of the USA (Number One), through Italian Lino Fardo, to Will Iston of Switzerland at the bottom — and finally get down to the real action. A double-press of a button serves the ball, then controls get a lot more complicated...

Button [A]'s a flat (normal) shot, [B]'s backspin and [C] adds top spin, but combining them with Down on the D-pad accesses speed ball, lob and drop shot. However, these are *after* a bounce; drop shots and four types of volley can be used in the air. *Davis Cup World Tour* supports six-button joypads, which simplifies matters somewhat.

Proceedings are lightened by speech bubbles, players shouting a triumphant 'Yes!' or $#@*ing expletive when they foul-up. Bubbles are used in the Contest command, where a player argues a suspect call with the ref. Occasionally he agrees and gives you a point but argue too often and he takes marks away!

Other options accessed via the Start button run an action replay, forfeit the match and display statistics — games, points, missed shots, aces, double-faults and so on.

But does *Davis Cup World Tour* double-fault at matchpoint then throw the whole match away, or sail through without a worry? ■

Due to the contrasting colour scheme, the clay court is the most difficult...

Plok-a-plok-a-plok! Each time a ball is returned, the machine steps up a gear.

The MD's most playable tennis sim offers oodles of options and overweight players!

WARREN 92% It seems that all I've done since SEGA FORCE became SEGA FORCE MEGA is write comments for tennis games. I've no misgivings about this one, however; I'm privileged to be able to cover *Davis Cup World Tour*.

Charging straight past the options, as I do, the first thing I noticed were the sprites. Rather than the slim, refined figures of most tennis games, these are stocky, tanned musclemen — escapees from a platform shoot-'em-up. They all wear unfortunate tan headbands, which often look like bald patches.

Though not quite as impressive as *Amazing Tennis*, the court shifts in convincing 3D as you move to either side. Ball movement's good but sometimes jerky.

In play, *Davis Cup* is superb. Within seconds of the start of your first game, you'll be exchanging triumphant cries and groans of defeat with your opponent, dashing around like the closing credits of a Benny Hill programme in a frantic effort to return even the best of shots. *Don't* take on a computer opponent first: they're all competent players, at the very least, so you'll get thrashed and think you've wasted your money.

One look at the options (I get to them eventually) and a little practice and you find *Davis Cup* is fantastic value. In addition to the usual exhibition match and tournament, there's the unique Davis Cup championship itself. Teamed with a person, you develop a love-hate relationship, as success or failure depends on both of you, individually and together. The Championship option's a great idea and increases lastability no end for solo players, and the range of practice options is amazing.

I couldn't write about *Davis Cup* without mentioning the crystal-clear sound. Players grunt and groan with effort, an upper-crust foreigner announces the score, and realistic ball sounds accompany the action. The title music's an unusual but pleasing mixture of harp and bassline.

Until now, MD tennis games have been good but nothing to shout about. *Davis Cup World Tour* stands head and shoulders above the crowd, as the best tennis sim *and* one of the top sports games for any machine.

Tour

ADE 90% Domark are 'on the up' at the minute, what with the stunning *F1* and now the superb *Davis Cup World Tour*. I'm not a tennis nut but because *Davis Cup* is so easy to get into, I was soon out there on centre court, completely hooked.

The players are responsive to every button-press and joypad manoeuvre, so there are no grumbles when shots are missed. The fault's your technique, not awkward controls! For the novice, there's a smart training section with a ball machine and the chance to practice your serve, shot precision and racket control.

The options are great, with several modes of play, singles or doubles, choice of court and selection of the top 50 players. Like I always say of tennis sims, it's best to play with a mate for a while before tackling computer opponents. You may be Number One and the computer down at 50, but it's a sure-fire bet the MD player will beat you.

The court perspective's great. Tengen have gone for a scrolling rather than static set-up, which works fine. Some back-seat tennis buffs said the split-screen two-player display looked confusing, but when they got hold of the joypad they rallied with no complaints.

If you were put off by our comments on *Agassi Tennis*'s controls, there are no such worries with *Davis World Tour*. It's an excellent tennis game and worthy of any sports fan's collection.

'Leave it, it's mine!' — 'No it's mine!' — 'Aargh!' Doubles matches can provoke colourful responses.

Fascinating facts from Wimbledon. Er, hang on...

- Around 31,200 balls are used during the championship
- A staggering 23 tons of (horribly expensive) strawberries and 12,500 bottles of Champagne are consumed each year
- Robinson's Barley Water is available on every court, in orange and lemon flavours
- There are 18 championship and 14 practice courts
- The oldest winner of the Men's Singles title was Arthur Gore, a British player who was 41 (and 182 days) when he won in 1909; the oldest female winner was another Brit, Charlotte Sterry, aged 37 (282 days) in 1908
- The youngest winner of the Men's Singles was Germany's Boris Becker, 17 (and 277 days) when he was 1985's champ; Lottie Dod from Britain won the 1887 Ladies' Singles title at the age of 15 (285 days)
- Only 27 days have been completely rained off since the championships began in 1877



'But the ball was in, man!' Hassle the umpire too often and you'll pay the price...

Above: Some bad misses are rewarded by a fine display of foul language!

Davis Cup World Tour

Domark
£39.99

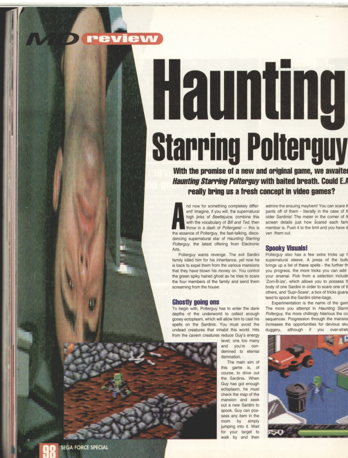
79	Graphics
84	Sound
92	Playability
90	Lastability

91

An excellent tennis sim with many options and humorous touches

Out: Now

☎ 081 780 2224



MD review

Haunting Starring Polterguy

With the promise of a new and original game, we awaited *Haunting Starring Polterguy* with baited breath. Could E.A. really bring us a fresh concept in video games?

And now for something completely different! Imagine, if you will, the supernatural high jinks of *Beetlejuice*, combine this with the vocabulary of *Bill and Ted*, then throw in a dash of *Poltergeist* — this is the essence of Polterguy, the fast-talking, disco-dancing supernatural star of *Haunting Starring Polterguy*, the latest offering from Electronic Arts.

Polterguy wants revenge. The evil Sardini family killed him for his inheritance, yet now he is back to expel them from the various mansions that they have blown his money on. You control the green spiky haired ghost as he tries to scare the four members of the family and send them screaming from the house.

Ghostly going ons

To begin with, Polterguy has to enter the dank depths of the underworld to collect enough gooey ectoplasm, which will allow him to cast his spells on the Sardinis. You must avoid the undead creatures that inhabit this world. Hits from the cavern creatures reduce Guy's energy level; one too many and you're condemned to eternal damnation.

The main aim of this game is, of course, to drive out the Sardinis. When Guy has got enough ectoplasm, he must check the map of the mansion and seek out a new Sardini to spook. Guy can possess any item in the room by simply jumping into it. Wait for your target to walk by and then admire the ensuing mayhem! You can scare the pants off of them - literally in the case of the older Sardinis! The meter in the corner of the screen details just how scared each family member is. Push it to the limit and you have driven them out.

Spooky Visuals!

Polterguy also has a few extra tricks up his supernatural sleeve. A press of the button brings up a list of these spells - the further that you progress, the more tricks you can add to your arsenal. Pick from a selection including 'Zom-B-ize', which allows you to possess the body of one Sardini in order to scare one of the others, and 'Supr-Scare', a box of tricks guaranteed to spook the Sardini slime-bags.

Experimentation is the name of the game. The more you attempt in *Haunting Starring Polterguy*, the more chillingly hilarious the consequences. Progression through the mansions increases the opportunities for devious skull-duggery, although if you over-stretch



Each room has a host of objects to possess. Here in the bathroom we suggest diving head first down the toilet.

Polterguy's ectoplasm resources, he is forced to return to the underworld and battle the demons in order to restock his power source.

Once a mansion has been cleansed of evil Sardinis, Polterguy has to follow the wretched family as they flee to another of their ill-gotten homes. Each time they move it becomes harder for Polterguy to scare, so seriously devious haunting is definitely the order of the day. But remember - it's more fun being one of the ghoulies then to be grabbed by them!

Now who lives in a house like this? Polterguy, it's over to you.

CHRIS 85% I was trying to think of a genre to place Haunted Starring Polterguy in, then I thought why bother? When you get a game that's got a fairly original theme there is really no need to try to pigeon hole it.

The idea is great. Scare the Sardinis until they lose control of their bodily functions - they make quite a mess believe me! Some of the jokes are hilarious - check out the slurping tongue and Flo Sardini's dress dropping reaction!

The latter mansions are fairly challenging which increases the game's staying power, but I must admit that once I had gone through Haunted Starring Polterguy a couple of times, the novelty did begin to wear a bit thin.

The graphics compliment the gameplay, with some brilliant visual effects, which combine with the well animated characters to give the game such a weird charm.

Someone out there has got a sick mind, but it has produced a brilliant game, so who's complaining?

Top-ten mega scares

Here, for your spine-tingling pleasure, are our ten favourite Haunting Starring Polterguy spooks and scares.

How about a tongue sarnie!?

Arachnaphobias got nothing on Guy

This is guaranteed to be a pain in the butt!

I just dont feel like myself at the moment!

There's something under the bed!

The latest in Hi-Fi technology.

Okay who spilt a pint of blood on the table.

Theres difinatly a few skeletons in this closet.

You dont get these in a Sega!

Something smells a bit spook!

Lets meet the Sardines.



VITO SARDINI

EDUCATION:

MBA IN SLEAZY ECONOMICS, TOTALLY HOSED V.

Vito - The 'Don' of the Sardini family. He's a tough cookie and the hardest character to scare out of the house.

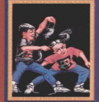
FLO SARDINI

HOBBIES:

SPENDING MONEY, BITCHING AND MOANING, COLLECTING FURS



Flo — The easiest to spook, Flo's certainly no oil painting. She seems to enjoy baring all, considering how simply it is to scare her out of her clothes.

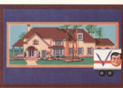


TONY SARDINI

FAVORITE MOVIES:

TEXAS JIGSAW MASSACRE PARTS 1-9

The kids — These brats can take alot of scares in their stride. However, find the right fright and they will wet themselves, before running screaming from the house.



Welcome to the home of the Sardinis, bought with the inheritance money they murdered you for.



The Sardinis having a quiet evening meal. Little do they know what lies around the corner — spooking, haunting and gore of the highest degree!

MARC 64% It's nice to see an original idea for once - few games allow you to play the role of a ghost with a sole aim in afterlife to scare the living daylights out of his earth-dwelling foes! Haunted Starring Polterguy manages to carry it out very well except for one area and that is that the game is just a little bit on the easy side. We found that after a few games the gameplay became a little repetitive and with a little practice you find yourself completing the game. Although *Haunting Starring Polterguy* contains some nice ideas there is just not enough depth to make the game interesting for more than a few plays, despite the great sense of humour.

Haunting Starring Polterguy

E.A.
£44.99

Score	Category
80	Graphics
71	Sound
82	Playability
70	Lastability

75

A hauntingly hilarious game if a little on the easy side.

Arcade ☎ 0753 549442



So you've got a nice new Mega-CD then have you? The trouble is you haven't got too many disks to play on it — except the latest Take That tune of course. Well this is the place to find out about every decent CD game to have pounced on Sega's baby in 1993. Check out our reviews then pop down the shops with your hard earned wonga!
Who, What, When, Where, How much?
WHAT: you know this
Give a dog a bone
ON WHAT: the console!
Images
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THE OBVIOUS: you know this is a ratings box really!
100 Graphics
100 Sound
100 Playability
100 Lastability
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WHEN: or what kind!
WHERE: who to hassle
HOW MUCH: wonga
WHO: the makers
Yup! This lot are still here (go home!)
Steve Shields
Adrian Pitt
Mat Yeo
Warren Lapworth
Paul Wooding
Tim Hirschmann
Mark Smith
Stix Jones
Chris Marke
Marc Powell
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mega-cd
reviews

CD review

Sonic the Hedg

Come on. You didn't expect Sega to make a spiffing new CD console and not make a Sonic game for it did you? Of course not, and here it is! Sonic CD in all it's singing and dancing glory.



Yep, Sonic, the most well-known console character in the world, most definitely returns. Once again he's up against his age-old adversary, the evil Dr. Robotnik, who's got some help this time round. He's created a diabolic robot copy of Sonic, called Mecha Sonic, who's vowed to rid the world of our hero for ever. Yeah right, pull the other one mate!

Sonic also has a new sidekick, although love interest might be more appropriate. She may only last until the second zone before being kidnapped but this little temptress is truly, madly, deeply in lurve with Sonic! She steals a kiss at every opportunity she gets, little minx.

Sonic's secrets

As you expect from the blue wonder-hog, every level's jam-packed with secret rooms, stages and bonuses. In this respect, the game mirrors Sonic's earlier exploits. Hence, if you look in the right places there's no telling what you might find. For a start, breakable walls, secret passages and hidden platforms lead you to extra lives, invincibility and shields, to name but a few of the bonuses.

What's new here is the chance to time-travel when you come across the past and future markers. These zones are variations on the present zone that you're in, with loads of extra hidden goodies to find.

Robotnik's toys are even more fiendish in CD version.

Each stage is split into three levels, as always Dr Robotnik's waiting for you at the end of the stage. He'll be in one of his wacky inventions which needs to be bashed a number of times to defeat his machine and progress into the game.

When Sonic completes a level, it's advisable to be holding 50 rings. The reason? Well, it's exactly the same as in the original *Sonic*. Get 50 rings and leap into the big golden ring at the end of the level — this'll take you into the bonus stage. The idea in these is to keep to the road, avoiding the water which will lose time. Watch out for the oil slicks that send Sonic sprawling and also the streams of water that knock him over.

Welcome to the Sonic CD.

...gehog CD



CHRIS 83% Drum roll please! Sonic reappears to prove that he's still king of the cute console characters. Thankfully, our prickly friend has succeeded in producing another immensely enjoyable cart.

After that bout of praise there's inevitably going to be a bit, and here it is. However good a game *Sonic CD* is, it does no justice to the Mega CD whatsoever. The machine's capabilities aren't extended in the slightest, which is a pity. Having said that it's still a smashing game, with loads of levels, bonuses and high speed mayhem. What more would you expect from Sonic? It also has plenty of humour, provided in the main, and probably unintentionally, by the song at the start.

The gameplay's still superb, it's a shame Sega didn't go for broke. They've played safe, given *Sonic* fans what they want but wasted the possibilities provided by the CD. Shame on you lads!

(Right) Even Sonic's impressed with Robotnick's new submarine.

(Below) Smash the time-pods to release their captives.

(Right) Smash the time-pods to release their captives.

(Below) ...And of course, those old favourites the loops are back again.

New obstacles on the CD are the many waterfall lifts.

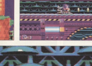
Ride your log safely in Tidal Tempest.

▶ Obviously, as it's a Mega CD game, this has a few extra features — the most hilarious being Sonic's theme tune during the opening credits. Let's just pray this is never released as a disc in its own right! The other extras are an auto-saving feature which uses the backup RAM in the CD drive to automatically save what level you're on, and a Time Attack mode, for recording your speed of completion on a level.

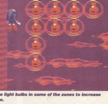
Sonic looks to have his work cut out here — Mecha Sonic is one tough droid for a start! We all know that the mighty blue one's a legend among console characters, but can he keep the fire burning bright with this offering? Only the SEGA FORCE MEGA review team would dare to say... ■











Smash the light bulbs in some of the zones to increase your score.



ARGH! It's mecha Sonic, Robotnic's new creation.

Poor old Robotnic's been toasted again.

MARK 86% Once again Sega have come up trumps with another great foray into the world of the spiky, blue megastar. This time Sonic's pulled himself a girlfriend, but guess what, she's so weak and defenceless she gets kidnapped by the second stage. So much for political correctness, eh!

Despite that, this is one CD that's worth getting. There are so many levels, bonus stages and secret worlds to battle through you'll soon become engrossed in the game.

On top of this it has great graphics, a quirky little soundtrack at the beginning (please don't ever release it as a single guys), and some smart new moves for Sonic. Now he can do a 3D loop the loop, take a cute little tumble on an oil slick and snogs his girlie at every opportunity!



Rotating turntables put our blue hero in a right spin.

If you thought the Mobius Loop in Sonic 2 was good, wait until you see the vertical ramps on the CD.



Sonic CD

Sega

£44.99

82	Graphics
89	Sound
84	Playability
83	Lastability

85

Sonic's back with a vengeance, but fails to fully utilise the Mega CD.

It's Sonic isn't it?! ☎ 071 373 3000



Silpheed

It appears the human race is under attack yet again from a hostile alien force. Only one person can save them. Yes, you guessed it, it's up to you to rescue mankind from certain oblivion. *Sigh...*

Touted as a *StarWing* beater, *Silpheed* is Sega's long-awaited 3D CD shoot-'em-up. The storyline comes from almost every other shoot-'em-up ever created, so let's dispense with the flimsy scenario and get down to what we're all actually interested in: the game itself (Yes, let's —Ed).

Regardless of all the hype, is it any good? Up until now, the majority of CD games have suffered from one fatal flaw: following impressive animated intro sequences, complete with full cinematic camera angles and spectacular musical interludes, ther"s basically a dull game without much to show off the Mega-CD's capabilities.

Check out the intro sequence, man! Wild!

For once, we're happy to say that after all that opening glitz and razzmatazz, *Silpheed* manages to present a rather decent shoot-'em-up. The most impressive thing isn't the actual size of the polygonal ships, asteroids and cityscapes but the sheer speed with which they move around the screen.

A Silph of the tongue

From your early battles high above planet Earth, it's onward, ever onward, to a variety of battle arenas. These include skirmishes with the enemy in a very impressive and treacherous asteroid belt, where not only do you have to fight off the attentions of what seem to be endless waves of alien craft, but also need to take extreme care in avoiding the larger asteroids which speed past your ship.

In the majority of levels, it's difficult not to just sit and marvel at the backdrops instead of concentrating on the gameplay. However, survival in the asteroid belt means you're in for some real treats. If you found the asteroid belt impressive, just wait until your ship goes screaming through enemy fleets or between buildings, as you fly at almost frightening speeds through the streets of the many alien cities en route.

Switch to plan B

Silpheed puts you in a high-tech attack fighter as you battle through hordes of vicious alien ships. The opposition attack in waves and come at you from all directions in a wide variety of attack patterns.

There are some pretty dense drone ships that fly by in such a way that they just beg to be blown into the vacuum of space. Then there are full-on suicide ships, whose navigation systems know only one flight path. Unfortunately for you, that's straight into your shiny top-of-the-range GTi attack craft!

At certain points during your travels, you're

The intro sequences never fail to as amaze, even with Japanese text.

Check out the Weapon Select screen. Great graphics, better arsenal (2-1).

Now that's what we call an asteroid! Who said this was just 3D Galaxians?

confronted with small groups of spinning diamond-shaped craft, whose destruction gives you a variety of goodies, including bonus points, smart-bombs and, most important of all, repair boxes which restore one level of your precious shield.

Is that a laser cannon in your pocket or…?

While on the subject of your shield, it's important to note exactly how it works. You can sustain several hits and collisions until your shield dissipates, but once it's destroyed, one more hit causes engine failure, which consequently affects manoeuvrability.

A further hit causes a short in your weapons system, especially nasty as it means your last line of defence — the lasers — begin to misfire. Once you reach this point, one more hit and your mortal remains become one more piece of space debris.

What would a shoot-'em-up be without a plethora of bonus weapons? (A SNES game? —Ed.) Well panic not, dear reader, because *Silpheed* has some real beauties — and we're not talking about your common or garden three-way shot, either. Oh no, when the *Silpheed* pilots get extra weapons, they get *big* ones.

Optional weapons along the way include a phalanx beam, which vents its fury in a blanket pattern, destroying anything that strays into its path.

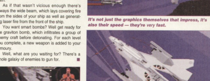
As if that wasn't vicious enough there's always the wide beam, which lays covering fire from the sides of your ship as well as generating laser fire from the front of the ship.

You want smart bombs? Well get ready for the graviton bomb, which infiltrates a group of enemy craft before detonating. For each level you complete, a new weapon is added to your armoury.

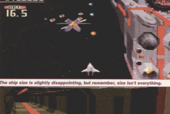
Well, what are you waiting for? There's a whole galaxy of enemies to gun for. ■



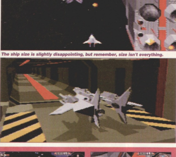
It's not just the graphics themselves that impress, it's also their speed — they're very fast.



See that ship? That's yours, that is. Never was there a more powerful craft to grace your Mega-CD!

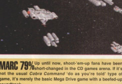


The ship size is slightly disappointing, but remember, size isn't everything.









MARC 79% Up until now, shoot-'em-up fans have been short-changed in the CD games arena. If it's not the usual *Cobra Command* 'do as you're told' type of game, it's merely the basic Mega Drive game with a beefed-up soundtrack.

So it was a welcome change to see in *Silpheed*, a game which has not only tried to use some of the Mega-CD's abilities, but also a title which is playable, addictive and challenging into the bargain.

There are only a few minor faults, one being the fact that although you're given three continues, you only get one life for each game. Frankly, this is just not enough.

The other noticeable problem you should be made aware o, is that if you purchase an import version, don't expect the full soundtrack you need to use a CDX cartridge. For some bizarre reason, the music track has a mind of it's own, playing at various different speeds (occasionally even the right one!) and the speech repeats like a needle has stuck on a record (you remember those — big, black plastic things).

If you own a CDX and aren't too bothered about that (shame on you!), go for it now. But I have to say that if you can wait for an official version, you definitely won't be disappointed with visuals, sound or gameplay. *Silpheed's* been hyped up to the nines but there really is substance behind the flashy intro.



Blast through that space debris! Keep an eye on the shield in the top-right.

In Silpheed, things rapidly progress from tough to near-impossible!

CHRIS 67% *Silpheed* is being hailed as the saviour of shoot-'em-ups for Mega-CD owners. Personally, I don't think it lives up to the hype which has surrounded since the first preview screenshots arrived.

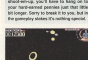
It's true that it makes impressive use of the CD's sprite-scaling and 3D polygon capabilities, but unfortunately there's something missing from the gameplay. Maybe it's because it borrows too much from very early shoot-'em-ups, such as *Zaxxon* and *Galaxian*, where gameplay boils down to a repetitive 'move left and right to avoid obstacles while shooting foes approaching from the top of the screen'. Hardly what the sophisticated gamer of the Nineties expects.

Or maybe it's because it seems to consist solely of graphically-impressive backgrounds which unfortunately are let down by mediocre alien attack ships and a lack of variety. It's very much like the bimbo equivalent of a game — very nice to look at but otherwise there's not much going on.

If you're very serious about shoot-'em-ups, you may find *Silpheed* enjoyable. But if you're looking to buy an impressive, not to mention playable shoot-em-up, you'll have to hang on to your hard-earned pennies just that little bit longer. Sorry to break it to you, but in the gameplay stakes it's nothing special.



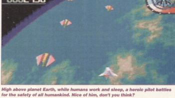
Do you want loud and bright explosions? Either buy some fireworks or get this! If you've read our comments, you know Silpheed's playability is questionable, but the graphics are spectacular.




Oh no — we're being attacked by Ringos (Get a grip —Mark). Aliens and firepower come in all shapes.



Further into the game, you can increase your weapon status by shooting diamond-shaped craft and collecting the power-ups inside. Boy, are you going to need them!



High above planet Earth, while humans work and sleep, a heroic pilot battles for the safety of all humankind. Nice of him, don't you think?

Silpheed

Sega

£44.99

Score	Category
72	Graphics
78	Sound
79	Playability
71	Lastability

73

Not the *StarWing*-beater it promised to be but visually impressive and playable all the same.

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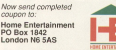
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Thunderhawk



When the Mega-CD was first launched there wasn't that much software that really showed what the new machine was capable of — until the arrival of *Thunderhawk*. Buy this and impress your SNES owning friends!

You slide behind the controls of your state-of-the-art Apache AH64A gunship; running your gloved hands slowly over the high-tech computer controlled display you flick a switch and listen to the satisfyingly familiar sound of the rotor blades quickening in pace. Slowly the helicopter rises into the air, majestically silhouetted against the bright light of the setting sun. Pausing only to offer a small prayer to which ever God may be listening, you glide out across the jungle terrain ready to battle a merciless enemy. With that most over-the-top of intros, we can now introduce the star of the show, the pick of the week, the cream of the milk (It's all getting to you, isn't it? - Mark) — Thunderhawk!

The game begins with a choice of ten different operations, each posing a number of tough questions about your skill as a pilot. Once you have made a choice the commanding officer will give a mission briefing, complete with a map detailing enemy positions and primary targets.

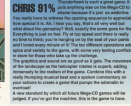
Incoming bogeys

Once you have been briefed the game moves into the breathtaking action sequences. The attention to detail in these sequences is faultless, with the possibility of viewing every object on the screen from 16 different angles. You can move the chopper in any direction and the radar screen will inform you of the whereabouts of the enemy, although if you take too many hits you run the risk

Thunderhawk rises slowly, primed for the battle ahead.

of your radar going down.
The controls for the chopper are very straightforward. You view the action through the cockpit window from a first person perspective, and the best advice on most missions is to go in low and fast with guns blazing. If you're too slow you will be a sitting duck for the enemy's own chopper divisions, all of whom are crackshots with their missiles. There is also plenty of enemy artillery around to keep you on your toes, ranging from missile launchers, to gunboats and even nuclear submarines

Danger! You're going down my friend. Crash and burn! Check out the bullet ridden cockpit window — it's back to basics for you.

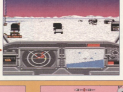


CHRIS 91% *Thunderhawk* is such a great game. It puts anything else on the Mega-CD to shame because it's just so addictive. You really have to witness the opening sequence to appreciate how special it is. Ah, I hear you say, that's all very well but what about the gameplay? Well, exactly the same goes for that! Everything is just so fast. Fly at top speed and there is really no time to think; you're hanging on by the seat of your pants and I loved every minute of it! The ten different operations add spice and variety to the game, with some very testing conflicts in store for those who take up the challenge.
The graphics and sound are as good as it gets. The movement of the landscape as the helicopter rotates is superb, adding immensely to the realism of the game. Combine this with a really thumping musical beat and a spoken commentary on your actions to create a game that pumps the adrenalin to overload!
A new standard by which all future Mega-CD games will be judged. If you've got the machine, this is the game to have.

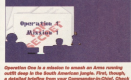
Thunderhawk's are go!

To combat this threat Thunderhawk has an impressive array of military hardware. Your arsenal consists of a chain gun, which does the business when it hits the target but can be a little on the erratic side; a limited supply of heat seeking missiles, which should be used sparingly for the most effective results; as well as plenty of fire rockets, though these beauties tend to devastate the area around the target as much as the target itself. On some stages you also carry special bombs to drop on the submarines that attempt to blow you out of the sky.
Each mission has a different difficulty level, so it's probably best to attempt one of the lower numbered operations first — something like the Panama Canal crisis would be a good early bet. It's best not to get too ►

What does a helicopter look like when it explodes? Well like this actually!



The mission — destroy the trucks ferrying the stolen biological weapons across the ice.



Operation One is a mission to smash an Arms running outfit deep in the South American jungle. First, though, a detailed briefing from your Commander-in-Chief. Check out the animation!

The start of the mission. Try to get past the enemy artillery to reach the primary targets.

Now you need to blow up the primary targets to achieve your objective and destroy the terrorist's arms plant.



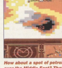
Once the mission is completed, head out of the danger zone to be de-briefed. Let's hope that it's all been successful!

CD review

involved with the enemy at the start of the mission. Instead seek out the primary targets and concentrate on finishing the mission in one piece.

There are plenty of varied scenarios to choose from. Each one is from a different part of the world, so the environment and terrain is always changing. Perhaps the pick of the missions are the operation to re-take a Bio-research base in Alaska or the hunt for a downed Stealth bomber in night time South America. In both cases clever use of the radar is essential to pick out the enemy bases against the respective snow and night scenarios.

Thunderhawk has great graphics, scintillating gameplay and a pounding musical score. It would seem that this could be the game to finally put the Mega-CD on the map.



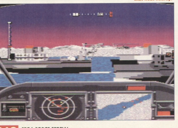
How about a spot of petrol bombing over the Middle East? That explosion should cause a few screens to shatter down Iraq way.

When the on-board computer tells you the target is locked the missiles will always hit the target.



Night flying in search of a missing Stealth Bomber is certainly not for those of a nervous disposition.

Below: Take out the enemy boats which guard the waterways, ensuring that you destroy the clusters of mines that float nearby.

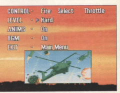


MARK 93% The Mega-CD, for all of its fantastic technology and high specification, just hasn't impressed with the first crop of releases, yet all of that is set to change with the introduction of *Thunderhawk*.
It is the game that the Mega CD has been screaming out for. The graphics are smooth and detailed, giving the grainy look, synonymous with so many other CD games, a much needed cold shoulder.

Mission briefings are spoken rather than listed, while the animation sequences feature detailed graphics rather then bland pictures. As for the gameplay, well few shoot-'em-ups come better or faster than this. Yet it is also much more than a shoot-'em-up — your copter, with its high tech gadgetry and plethora of weapons, is a joy to manoeuvre, while the ten operations span the entire world, plummeting you into missions of truly global proportions. You will face the wrath of all manner of enemy trucks and squadrons, while the variety of operations and three difficulty levels will ensure that all would-be Top Guns have a long graduation.

Another point worth mentioning (well, it's important to me!) is that this hopefully heralds the end of the 'press fire/push right' genre, so much a feature of the earlier CD games such as *Cobra Command* and *Road Avenger*. The Mega CD warrants state-of-the-art action games, in which you take control of the craft, not just third-rate versions of the early-80's laser disc arcade machines. *Thunderhawk* delivers the goods — and then some — with the most thrilling gameplay, explosive graphics and *interesting* soundtrack that we have yet seen or heard on an arcade-style CD game.

Finally, we have a game worthy of the CD which no self-respecting owner should be without.



A skill control menu allows you to select the difficulty level of your opponents.

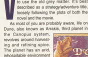


Dune CD

December sees the release of Dune on Mega-CD, an enhanced version of the Mega Drive cart. Originally an excellent science-fiction novel by Frank Herbert, Dune has also been a major motion picture.

Virgin's CD version of *Dune* requires you to use the old grey matter. It's best described as a strategy/adventure title, loosely following the plots of both the novel and the movie.

As most of you are probably aware, life on Dune, also known as Arrakis, third planet in the Canopus system, revolves around harvesting and refining spice. The planet has an arid, inhospitable environment but it's the only place in the solar-system where spice is found.

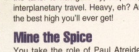


If you're wondering why spice's so important, it's the only substance in the galaxy enabling the taker to navigate hyperspace, the key to interplanetary travel. Heavy, eh? And probably the best high you'll ever get!

Mine the Spice

You take the role of Paul Atreides, the only son of the mighty House of Atreides. Your mission's to destroy your rivals, the evil Harkonnen, and gain complete control of Arrakis' spice industry.

To do this requires a great deal of skill and thought. Diplomacy, man-management and military know-how are all vital requirements, as you try to enlist the help of the indigenous population of Dune, the Fremen.



These guys are vital to have on your side. Among their number are prospectors, who seek out rich veins of spice, miners, for digging the stuff up, and warriors who help fight the Harkonnen.

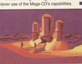
To get the co-operation of the Fremen, venture into the desert in search of their encampments. The first person to talk to is the Chief of the Tribe, who decides whether he wants the rest of the tribe to aid you. To mine the spice, they ask for harvesters and other equipment which you can find hidden on the planet.

The Fremen also give you supplies of stillsuits that retain moisture, allowing you to survive in the desert. Get these by seeking out the specialist-makers hidden somewhere in the desert.

Throughout the game, help's close at hand in the shape of palace advisers, who tell you anything you need to know about the planet, such as how spice production's going, the movements of the Harkonnen and the activities of the Empire. The Emperor demands increasingly large shipments of spice, so it's important to be aware of his orders and thoughts.

Dune boasts outstanding graphics, many of which have been adapted from the film's images. All the characters' comments are relayed through digitised speech; the info follows logically on from the action preceding it.

A real thinking man's game, *Dune's* made clever use of the Mega-CD's capabilities. ■



Welcome to Dune: Rooms with a scenic view, optional.







Looks good from here!

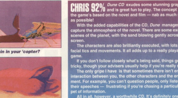
Come on down! The spice is right...





Paul Atreides | Stilgar | Baron Harkonnen | Jessica | Guerney Halleck





Fancy a spin in your 'copter?

CHRIS 92% *Dune CD* exudes some stunning graphics, and is great fun to play. The concept behind the game's based on the novel and film — nab as much spice as possible!

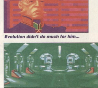
With the added capabilities of the CD, *Dune* manages to capture the atmosphere of the novel. There are some excellent scenes of the planet, with the sand blowing gently across the screen.

The characters are also brilliantly executed, with lots of little facial tics and movements. It all adds up to a really playable game.

If you don't follow closely what's being said, things get a little tricky, though your advisers usually help if you're really stuck.

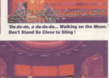
The only gripe I have is that sometimes there isn't enough interaction between you, the other characters and the environment. For example, you can't question people, only listen to their speeches — frustrating if you're chasing a particular snippet of information.

All in all, however, a worthwhile CD. It's definitely one of the better ones on the market at the moment.

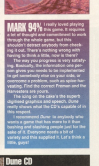


Evolution didn't do much for him...





'Do-do-do, a da-da-da... Walking on the Moon.' *Don't Stand So Close* to Sting !



MARK 94% I really loved playing this game. It requires a lot of thought and commitment to work through the whole game, but this shouldn't detract anybody from checking it out. There's nothing wrong with having to think a little, now is there?

The way you progress is very satisfying. Basically, the information one person gives you needs to be implemented to get somebody else on your side, or overcome a problem, such as spice-harvesting. Find the correct Freman and the Harvesters are yours.

The icing on the cake's the superb digitised graphics and speech. *Dune* really shows what the CD's capable of in this respect.

I recommend *Dune* to anybody who wants a game that has more to it than bashing and slashing people just for the sake of it. Everyone needs a bit of variety and this supplied it. Let's think a little, guys!



The rotting remains of Paul Atreides lost in the desert...

Use telepathy to contact the Fremen.



Thufir Hawat! Made up name, or what?



Dune CD

Virgin £49.99

Score	Category
92	Graphics
91	Sound
93	Playability
91	Lastability

93 An excellent strategy CD, requiring plenty of thought.

Strategy ☎ 081 960 2255



Devasta



Here is a great example of what the Sega Mega-CD is capable of. Full Motion Video with stunning graphics and a great blasting game. The Japanese are fond of their animated intro sequences and this is a prime example.

Japan is under siege: alien robots are plundering the islands, killing thousands of innocent civilians and using Mount Fuji as a lavatory! The mayor has called a state of emergency and the people are fleeing from the mechanical menaces. All looks to be lost.

Well, not quite, because in a small government laboratory a team of engineers have developed a weapon to combat the aliens. Code-named Devastator, this Transformer-like machine can change from a car to a plane to a robot in the blink of an eye — and it's armed to the teeth with the latest in high-tech weaponry.

The Devastator had only been up and running for a couple of hours when a distress call was intercepted. The Presidential bullet shuttle — members of Japan's royal family, the government, various scientists and strategists aboard — had been spotted by a unit of robots. If the shuttle's set upon before it escapes the city, there'll be no one to lead the resistance and Japan will become an annexe of the alien empire!

Anchors away!

Your only hope is to lead the Devastator against the alien hordes, fighting through the city and forests until you reach their home planet, where you can give them a taste of their own medicine.

The levels vary between sideways-scrolling shoot-'em-ups, where you battle the aliens' airborne forces, and scrolling platform stages where you have to find the exit — and its guardian. After each level you're rewarded with a few minutes of Manga animation to keep you up to date with the plot (if you can understand it).

As high-tech weaponry goes, your ship's up there with the best of 'em. It's equipped with an anchor-style weapon (the 'Anker') which, although limited in range, packs a mean punch.

Collecting cannisters dropped by defeated foes gives a three-way rifle, double-ring laser and bombs. Crouching down activates a turbo boost, ideal for getting out of sticky situations.

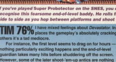
Wide, short and tall

The robots come in various sizes, shapes and attitudes. Some fire salvo after salvo of missiles, others take the occasional pot-shot. The ones you really have to watch out for are the large stationary machines who drain all your energy in one go!

When you've lost your four segments of energy, you lose one of your lives (or 'stock', as Wolfteam put it). Lives are determined on the options screen and when you run out, there are a few continues to play with. If you find the going on the easy side or can't get off the first level, the difficulty setting can be changed, too.

Fans of Manga and shoot-'em-ups will want to buy *Devastator* right away but we suggest you check out our comments first — after all, pretty graphics aren't everything! ■

Don't laugh at his stumpy legs, this guardian has impressive weaponry.



If you've played Super Probotector on the SNES, you may recognise this fearsome end-of-level baddy. He rolls from side to side as you hop between platforms and shoot him.

TIM 76% I have mixed feelings about *Devastator*. In places the gameplay's absolutely cracking, in others it's a tad mediocre.

For instance, the first level seems to drag on for hours — nothing particularly exciting happens and the end-of-level guardian takes many hits before shuddering off the screen. However, some of the later shoot-'em-up antics are nothing short of brilliant.

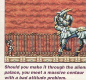
The same goes for the graphics — there are times when they're breathtaking and others when they're merely average. The parallax scrolling's first class and the Manga-style animation between levels is cool.

The sound is okay: effects are nothing special but the speech is very life-like. I find that the sonics in many CD games, including this one, are surprisingly weak — the quality's superb but imagination's lacking.

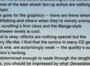
If you're determined enough to wade through the lengthier, boring levels, you should be impressed by what *Devastator* has to offer.

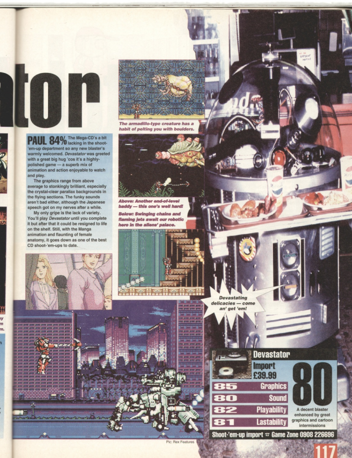


Snakes alive! Many of the critters out to trash your tin torso are nothing new — worm-like enemies are ten-a-penny.



Should you make it through the aliens' palace, you meet a massive centaur with a bad attitude problem.





PAUL 84% The Mega-CD's a bit lacking in the shoot-'em-up department so any new blaster's warmly welcomed. *Devastator* was greeted with a great big hug 'cos it's a highly-polished game — a superb mix of animation and action enjoyable to watch and play.

The graphics range from above average to stonkingly brilliant, especially the crystal-clear parallax backgrounds in the flying sections. The funky sounds aren't bad either, although the Japanese speech got on my nerves after a while.

My only gripe is the lack of variety. You'll play *Devastator* until you complete it but after that it could be resigned to life on the shelf. Still, with the Manga animation and flaunting of female anatomy, it goes down as one of the best CD shoot-'em-ups to date.

The armadillo-type creature has a habit of pelting you with boulders.

Above: Another end-of-level baddy — this one's well hard!

Below: Swinging chains and flaming jets await our robotic hero in the aliens' palace.

Devastating delicacies — come an' get 'em!

Devastator

Import £39.99

85	Graphics
80	Sound
82	Playability
81	Lastability

80

A decent blaster enhanced by great graphics and cartoon intermissions

Shoot-'em-up import ☎ Game Zone 0908 226696

Pic: Rex Features

Switch

It's weird, it's wacky — well what do you expect? It's Japanese! They certainly know how to have fun, even if it does involve lots of farting and vomiting! *Switch* is a CD to get out at parties — you'll laugh your socks off!

Prepare yourself for a review packed full of Japanese humour — ie, loads of farts, breasts and vomit! Those wacky Orientals have brought us another off-beat CD adventure game — and they don't come more off-beat than this.

Switch is hard to describe — it's in Japanese, for starters — but it seems that all the computers and machines in the world have become linked by an evil main terminal. Mankind will perish unless our hero, Slap, and his dog, Stick, enter the network and shut the rogue computer down, for good.

Our cute little heroes venture through a totally insane computer-generated world, activating switches (or buttons). A panel of several buttons appears for every scene and when you press one, something strange happens...

Right on the button

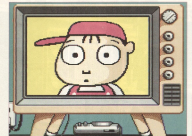
For instance, in one scene you're in a desert, at a nuclear test site. Press a particular switch and a huge backside appears on the horizon, then farts into the air! This isn't a game for your parents — unless they're into the Monty Python brand of humour. On every screen there are various comical situations to see, around a thousand in all, but some switches move you on a level or take you back a few levels. Press too many wrong switches and you blow up one of 30 famous monuments (totalling the Great Wall of China is a major laugh).

The gags range from the sublime to the ridiculous and back again, accounting for all kinds of tastes and all kinds of humour. It's not everybody's cup of tea — especially if you want taxing gameplay — but you could be just the person to switch things back to normal. ■

TIM 84% This is one of the most amusing games I've ever played; being a Rude Boy Razzer (a what?! —Sub Ed), *Switch* is right up my street. It consists of over a thousand visual gags, some surreal, many just toilet humour. The best joke I've seen is where poor Slap's in a picturesque snowy scene — he presses a button and the snow turns into dog pooh!

The graphics are fantastic — it looks like a Monty Python cartoon extravaganza, even including the trademark giant foot. The sound is first class. The jingles are catchy and there are oodles of amusing yelps, squeals, thuds and splats.

Switch is incredibly easy but gameplay boils down to a simple memory test. You either try to remember the correct button to move onto the next scene or choose a favourite joke. Still, *Switch*'s many, many gags give hours of fun; a must for those of a childish disposition — like myself!



'Look Mum, it's me!' Slap makes his Mega CD debut.

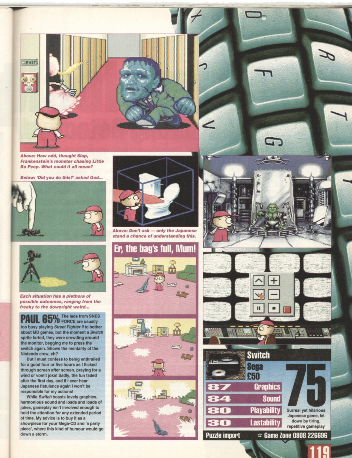
Give it up, sucker! This little cap gun'll never work against THAT thing...

...I don't know, though — Green Jelly anyone? Just grab a spoon!

What's going on here, then? Answers on a postcard, please...



Above: Slap examines the Sega Force Mega photocopier. Press the wrong button and sludge oozes out. Funny, that, so does the one in the game!



Above: How odd, thought Slap, Frankenstein's monster chasing Little Bo Peep. What could it all mean?

Below: 'Did you do this?' asked God...

Above: Don't ask — only the Japanese stand a chance of understanding this.

Each situation has a plethora of possible outcomes, ranging from the freaky to the downright weird...

Er, the bag's full, Mum!

PAUL 65% The lads from SNES FORCE are usually too busy playing *Street Fighter II* to bother about MD games, but the moment a *Switch* sprite farted, they were crowding around the monitor, begging me to press the switch again. Shows the mentality of the Nintendo crew, eh?

But I must confess to being enthralled for a good four or five hours as I flicked through screen after screen, praying for a wind or vomit joke! Sadly, the fun faded after the first day, and if I ever hear Japanese flatulence again I won't be responsible for my actions!

While *Switch* boasts lovely graphics, harmonious sound and loads and loads of jokes, gameplay isn't involved enough to hold the attention for any extended period of time. My advice is to buy it as a showpiece for your Mega-CD and 'a party piece', where this kind of humour would go down a storm.

Switch

Sega
£50

87	Graphics
84	Sound
80	Playability
30	Lastability

75

Surreal yet hilarious Japanese game, let down by tiring, repetitive gameplay

Puzzle import — ☎ Game Zone 0908 226696

Sherlock Consulting Detective

This is the first of the CDs from Sega starring that famous deerstalker-wearing detective. There are two more on the way, all showing off the Mega-CD's Full Motion Video capabilities. Packed with Victorian villains to put to rights and lots of terrible cockney accents this is an interesting exhibit.

If you were a regular SEGA FORCE reader, you'll remember how we raved about the first Sherlock Holmes CD. It introduced a new style of game and thus went down a storm, especially with Ade, who's since become an avid viewer of *The Bill*. Now Sherlock has more cases to solve, and according to his trusty sidekick, Watson, they're the toughest yet.

Presented before you are three crimes which have baffled Scotland Yard and now rest at the feet of Baker Street's Number One son. They are *The Two Lions*, *The Pilfered Paintings* and *The Murdered Munitions Magnate*. They're totally new cases, so don't think you can dig out your Arthur Conan Doyle books and look for the answer — your gonna have to think like a real detective to solve these crimes.

Sherlock and Watson have five sources of information from which you must extract as many facts as possible. These are selected from a desk-top style screen, where you simply click on the icon of the desired action.

More source than Heinz

First are the London newspapers. If you're short of leads or think you need to follow a new line of enquiry, give them a quick scan and you might unearth a new clue.

The second source are the Bow Street Regulars, professional gents who Holmes trusts — doctors, criminologists, journalists, forensic experts and so on. They're the people to talk to when you want hard facts to prove or disprove your theories.

You'd probably class the Baker Street Irregulars as urchins but Holmes puts great faith in London's backstreet boys, and more often than not they supply information straight from the grapevine.

The final source is the most widely used. Holmes' address book contains every name and place vital to all three cases. You'll find suspects, victims, beneficiaries — even the hotels and pubs where dirty deeds allegedly took place — and it's up to you to visit them and collate the evidence.

Clued up

To solve each crime, you must have a suspect (or suspects) and a motive. How do you get these? We suggest you put on a pair of headphones, plug them in your MD, grab a notepad and make sure you've time to spare. Although *Sherlock Holmes II* has a save option, breaking off from a case partway through loses your train of thought.

When you visit people and places, you're greeted with a sequence of film from which you must extract clues. Apply logic to them and you should keep unearthing leads.

When you think you've enough information to solve the crime, click on the gavel icon and you're transported to the court room, where you're asked multiple-choice questions. If you've done your homework, you should answer them correctly, solve the crime and get a full explanation of the felony and a score, based on how many clues you unearthed before you took the case to court.

Holmes always says you could've solved the case in about half the moves that you did. Don't you hate smart-arse detectives?

Spot the difference

As it's a sequel, you might be wondering what the differences are between this and its predecessor — apart from the cases themselves, of course.

The original's biggest problem was the dialogue. You often had to replay entire scenes over and over again to make sure you'd noted all the names and snippets of information. Now each scene appears in a box with cassette player controls underneath, allowing you to fast-forward, rewind, replay and pause any scene so you can skip around each conversation.

The graphics have been enhanced. Gone are the grainy visuals that made Holmes and his mates look like Lego men, most scenes are now clear and colourful, giving that sense of realism and making *you* feel as Holmes did, over a hundred years ago.

'Lead on, Watson, there's work to be done — and I've got a violin lesson at three!' ■

The full motion video effects have been greatly improved in this sequel...



Holmes' Baker Street Regulars let us into their secret — bowls of All-Bran!

Sherlock Holmes may have a brilliant mind but his taste in art stinks. This wall acts as an options menu for the court, notepad, Irregulars, Times screens and so on.

PAUL 79% Hey, I get the chance to play 'teccy again! Since solving the cases in the first Sherlock game, I've been gagging for more Olde England crimes to test my powers of deduction.

The controls and options are the same as the first *Sherlock Holmes*, so if you've played it you can tear off the cellophane and get straight into the action. The addition of an editing facility is a godsend — replaying scenes over and over again because you kept missing something was the biggest flaw in the original.

Now for the moan: why is this a stand-alone game? Surely it would've been better to incorporate a load option in the original, so new cases could be accessed from data discs? If this CD's successful, there might be a *Sherlock Holmes III* or *IV*, and if you want all the cases you're talking £180 for basically one game!

Expense aside, *Sherlock Holmes, Consulting Detective* is a quality product — great graphics and sound combine with brain-busting gameplay to stretch your intelligence to the limit. This volume's the better of the two but once you solve the cases you're unlikely to play again. And if you bought the original, do you want to spend £45–50 on effectively the same game?

kHolmes

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WARREN 77% Mr 'Olmes is back with three more cases to confuse and befuddle Mega-CD owners. Concentrate on the killed cats then ponder the pilfered paintings and muse over the munitions magnate.

Once again, the American actors' accents are often painful to us true Brits. They begin as *Mary Poppins* Cockneys or plum-in-mouth gentry then go globe-trotting: Australian, Indian, Swedish, Mexican… all sorts of influences wander into their voices.

Luckily, the naff accents don't distract you from their words, as they're the most important part of the game. Have pen and plenty of paper handy then hang on the various characters' words, jotting down *any* facts and gossip which could be of use later.

The original volume's three cases were on a single disc but here they're spread across two — and the digitised video graphics are much the better for it. Holmes' first cases were dark, its characters barely moved and were stained with gaudy splodges.

Sherlock Holmes II is brighter and clearer, and the actors are much livelier. The VCR-like forward/reverse search and pause buttons are useful but their actions aren't as well executed as they could've been.

With great sound, superb graphics and engrossing, cleverly-designed gameplay, this is one of the better CD games… but the price is a downer. The cases are longer, more interesting and harder to solve than those of the original, so if you've the notes, *Sherlock Holmes II*'s the detective to consult.

Doctor Watson consults a hotel receptionist. Unfortunately, he's heard the old 'Mr and Mrs Smith' ploy before.

Take your case to the high court — your honour depends on a conviction!

The London Times is an excellent source of information if you're smart enough to extract fact from fiction.

Holmes and Watson visit various plush residences in the course of their work.

Pic: Rex Features

Sherlock Holmes Vol II	
Sega	78
£49.99	
85	Graphics
80	Sound
79	Playability
70	Lastability

Expensive but a great roleplaying/puzzle game. Well worth considering

Adventure import ☎ Game Zone (0908) 226696

Mega Drive Buyers' Guide

Arcade Games

Coin-op conversions and mixed-genre games make these games the most action-packed around. *Dragon's Fury* leads the pack with 93% — what could be more arcade-like than pinball?

ALISIA DRAGOON
SEGA ● £19.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **78%**
A magical wench, unleashing thunderbolts and teaming up with little dragons to save a fantasy world. Plenty of good ideas and not enough enemies, but a bargain at this price.

AMERICAN GLADIATORS
GAMETEK ● £39.99 ● Tel 0101 305 935 3995 **47%**
Compete against the Glads or some friends in six events, including The Assault, Atlasphere and Joust. Graphics, sound and events are uniformly mediocre and the package soon bores. For die-hard fans of the series.

BATMAN
SUNSOFT ● £39.99 ● Tel 010 1714 8814500 **79%**
Based on the Tim Burton movie, graphics are as dark and grim as the real thing. Platform, beat-'em-up and racing elements keep you busy but it's a bit easy.

BATMAN RETURNS
SEGA ● £49.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **67%**
The Bat's back — as are the murky visuals. The Caped Crusader is slow and a devil to control, gameplay's repetitive but there's a challenge this time.

BATMAN: REVENGE OF THE JOKER
SUNSOFT ● £39.99 ● Tel 0101 714 891 4500 **60%**
The laughing one has henchsprites everywhere but the comic version Batman has a multi-purpose Batarang. It's monotonous and *tough*. Some good graphics, though.

BATTLETOADS
TRADEWEST ● £39.99 ● Tel 0101 903 874 2683 **58%**
Pimple the Battletoad has been captured and one or two toad colleagues launch a rescue. Various types of level and colourful graphics are commendable but it starts very difficult and gets tougher! Platform fans looking for a challenge should check this out.

DRAGON'S FURY
TENGEN/DOMARK ● £39.99 ● Tel 081 780 2222 **93%**
Three smooth-scrolling screens of mystical pinball 'table' are haunted by monks, undead soldiers and a transforming enchantress. Thumping good sounds and fast, realistic ball movement bring it to life, and with a host of bonus rooms, you'll flip over the lastability! Who would have thought console pinball could be so much fun?

DJ BOY
SEGA ● £39.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **32%**
As the Boy, skate and bash through levels. Graphics are drab, effects similarly basic and controls are unresponsive. Available for years on import, it's terribly old fashioned and deathly dull.

GADGET TWINS
IMAGITEC ● £39.99 ● Tel 0101 305 935 3995 **80%**
Bop and Bump take to the skies to find their king's gem, collecting coins in order to buy better baddie-bashing gadgets. Bright, cartoony graphics give the illusion of a child's game but a big challenge and superb two-player option prove otherwise.

GREENDOG
SEGA ● £39.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **72%**
Greendog dodges animals or stuns them with a frisbee as he searches for the Lost Surfboard of the Ancients. He travels on skates or skateboard on alternate levels, adding flavour to a so-so cart. This is one surf dude worth hangin' out with.

MAKE MY VIDEO: KRIS KROSS
SONY ● £44.99 ● TEL 0101 310 858 3777 **78%**
Not exactly arcade, but it doesn't fit *any* category. Use three video screens and effects such as strobe and slice to recreate videos requested by a radio/video show's 'listeners'. If you like the band, you'll love it, otherwise interest soon palls.

MARBLE MADNESS
ELECTRONIC ARTS ● £34.99 ● Tel 0753 549442 **77%**
Weird geometric landscapes are the home of weirder creatures, all out to stop the marble. It's a race against time — and sometimes a second player. Graphics are unusual but effective, controls and gameplay are unique. If only there were more levels...

OUTLANDER
MINDSCAPE ● £39.99 ● Tel 0444 246333 **63%**
In a post-nuclear world, hit the road... slowly, and nudge and shoot bikers. There's a neat inset screen which is used to line up a shotgun with targets but this partly causes the slowdown. The action switches to scrolling beat-'em-up when you enter a village. An average *Mad Max* crash 'n' bash.

PAC-MANIA
DOMARK ● £29.99 ● Tel 081 780 2222 **71%**
Pac-man gets an update, receiving three-dimensional mazes and a jumping ability. Gameplay's simplistic but highly playable, helped by a nicely-shaded Pac sphere and toe-tapping music. Wonderful semi-nostalgia.

PAPERBOY
DOMARK ● £39.99 ● Tel 081 780 2222 **50%**
The coin-op wowed punters when it first appeared, but without the handlebars and speech, the conversion disappears into the crowd. Trundle along diagonally-scrolling streets, throwing papers into mail boxes and avoiding odd people. Graphics and sound are quite close to the coin-op but the gameplay's novelty soon wanes.

PAPERBOY II
DOMARK ● £39.99 ● Tel 081 780 2222 **55%**
More of the same, but you can choose your sex and launch papers both left and right — though this is unnecessary on individual sections. Lots of great speech provides laughs but gameplay's strictly limited.

ROLLING THUNDER 2
SEGA ● £39.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **79%**
Become Secret Agent Leila or Albatross and infiltrate enemy bases, pumping adversaries full of lead and ducking into doorways. Large, realistically-animated sprites, tough but playable.

SAINT SWORD
TAITO ● £39.99 ● Tel 0101 708 520 9280 **65%**
Hack your way along levels and transform into a centaur, birdman or fishman! It's a great idea and so a pity it's been wasted. Collision detection's cruel but short, dull levels mean you won't care. Reasonable graphics, few effects.

TOXIC CRUSADERS
SEGA ● £39.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **61%**
Choose Toxie himself or one of his colleagues and become a Crusader (or two) and run then skate along six levels, bashing baddies and collecting power-ups. Although some sprites are well formed, repetitive gameplay, iffy collision detection and bad control response send this to an early grave.

Arcade Adventure

Perfect for those who want to use equal parts of brain and digital dexterity. Three of the winners, *Prince Of Persia, Another World* and *Flashback*, sport the best MD animation ever.

ALEX KIDD – ENCHANTED CASTLE
SEGA ● £19.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **37%**
Explore Paperock Planet, battling and chatting to various characters. Games of Paper, Scissors, Stone earns items to help you. Bland MS-like graphics, naff scrolling, forgettable effects, poor controls and insipid gameplay.



ANOTHER WORLD

VIRGIN/DELPHINE ● £39.99 ● Tel 081 960 2255 **91%**

An experiment gone wrong sends Lester to another world. Armed with his wits, a gun and stunning polygon animation, he tackles its dangers. Sharp reflexes and a sharp mind are required to conquer this atmospheric epic.

BART VS THE SPACE MUTANTS

FLYING EDGE ● £39.99 ● Tel 0962 877788 **91%**

Eek! The Space Mutes are plotting to take over the Earth! Only Bart Simpson knows of their plot so is out to save the day. He first uses a spray can and ingenuity to spoil the items they need. Neat sprites, bubbly muzak and Bart samples polish up this engaging cartoon-like adventure.

ECCO: THE DOLPHIN

SEGA ● £39.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **91%**

The dolphin's chums have been 'napped. Ecco explores, consults glyphs and uses sonar to stun opponents. Superbly drawn and animated graphics, evocative sounds and a strangely soothing challenge.

FLASHBACK

US GOLD ● £39.99 ● Tel 021 625 3366 **93%**

Conrad's travelled to an alien planet to thwart their Earth-conquering plan. Many objects are collected and places visited, all richly coloured. Animation and attention to detail are unbelievable. The best of its kind.

NIGHT TRAP (CD)

SONY ● £54.99 ● Tel 0101 310 858 3777 **74%**

Controversy time! Scan different sections of a house and trigger traps to defend young women. It's a repetitive matter of finding enemy after enemy, but the sound's great and digitised video pleasing. No violence or nude women, though!

PRINCE OF PERSIA (CD)

BRODERBOUND ● £44.99 ● Tel N/A **69%**

What else but save the princess? There's a good intro and a great set of authentic eastern tunes but the graphics are mediocre for a CD game and it doesn't play as well as the Master System version. Let the damsel croak.

SHADOW OF THE BEAST

ELECTRONIC ARTS ● £19.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **54%**

Traverse scrolling plains and vast caverns to find your loathed master. Keys, potions and weapons are collected, although fists are often used. Parallax scrolling and detailed sprites don't increase lastability.

SHADOW OF THE BEAST II

ELECTRONIC ARTS ● £39.99 ● Tel 0753 549442 **68%**

The hero, human once more, is in search of his sis. Enemies are dispatched with a ball and chain, objects are found, used and traded. Graphics and sound are impressive but gameplay's tough and puzzle solutions are tenuous.

TIME GAL (CD)

WOLFTEAM ● £40.00 ● Tel N/A **70%**

To help guide Gal through time, react to globes at the screen's edge. Japanese cartoon action portrays dinosaurs, WWII planes, pirates, sharks and the undead. Great fun but, like most cartoon-based CDs, sadly limited.

TOEJAM & EARL

SEGA ● £19.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **90%**

Three-legged ToeJam and fat Earl have crash-landed on a particularly weird part of Earth. One or two players search for parts of their ship while gathering 'presents' which fend off adversaries. An astonishing array of wacky sound samples and cartoon graphics make it a feast for the senses. Weird — but cool!

WHERE IN THE WORLD IS CARMEN SANDIEGO?

ELECTRONIC ARTS ● £39.99 ● Tel 0753 549442 **81%**

As an Acme detective, search for Carmen and her henchmen. An icon-driven control system's used to gather clues which lead to various locations. Digitised pics and cartoon sprites but it's the deductive gameplay that hooks.

WHERE IN TIME IS CARMEN SANDIEGO?

ELECTRONIC ARTS ● £49.99 ● Tel 0753 549442 **79%**

Use the enclosed encyclopaedia to find clues to historic times and places. A pointer system enters clues to narrow down and capture suspects. Graphics are bland but 80 missions keep you busy and teach you a few things, too.

WONDERBOY V

SEGA ● £39.99 ● Tel 071 373 2222 **84%**

'Boy explores Monster Land in arcade sections, slaying monsters to earn money for weapons, magic spells and items. A relaxed pace but the mixture of arcade and RPG works well. Battery backup keeps you going.

Beat-'em-up

If inflicting black eyes, bruises and broken limbs is your idea of fun, there's sure to be something here you'll enjoy. Several involve platform sections but body blows are king.

CYBORG JUSTICE

SEGA ● £39.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **40%**

Bash mechanoids' bolts. A number of robot-rattling options, including 'build your own', and superb animation, but gameplay's as repetitive as the backgrounds and flat as the effects. Try but don't buy.

DOUBLE DRAGON

BALLISTIC ● £29.99 ● Tel 081 877 0880 **39%**

Jimmy and/or Billy Lee pound through thug after thug, level after level, to rescue their favourite girl. It doesn't take them long because *DD*'s easy, not to mention outdated.

DOUBLE DRAGON II

ACCLAIM ● £39.99 ● Tel 0962 877788 **70%**

Jimmy and brother go in search of magical gems which bring people back from the dead — pretty handy, especially as Jim's girl is currently corpse-like. Great graphics and sound but limited moves and repetitive gameplay spoil this scrolling bash-'em.

FATAL FURY

SEGA ● £39.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **79%**

From eight ugly, muscly streetfighters, one-on-one bouts are arranged, *Street Fighter II* fashion. Graphics are impressive — massive characters but minimal slowdown — and moves take time to master. The computer's a good opponent but a second player's better.

FISTS OF STEEL

SAGE'S CR. ● £44.99 ● Tel 0101 415 346 2278 **29%**

A crusty coin-op featuring cute dwarven fighters. But their animation is pitiful (two frames per action) and FX are dreadful. There are only two moves and you can't retaliate once an opponent starts laying in. A loser.

GOLDEN AXE II

SEGA ● £19.99 ● Tel 071 373 2222 **88%**

One or two players become a barbarian, dwarf or Amazon woman to retrieve the axe. Basically the same as the original but with tougher, faster enemies and controllable magic level. Not massive but a lot of fun for two combat fans.

KING OF THE MONSTERS

SEGA ● £39.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **62%**

Become a Godzilla lookalike, rock creature, mutated insect or giant superhero and mangle Japanese towns while battling another monster from the list. An energy barrier keeps the duo in check and icons eventually power you up in awesome fashion: your sprite changes colour. Frivolous graphics for frivolous gameplay but it passes a few hours.

LAST BATTLE

SEGA ● £19.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **22%**

One of the first MD games — and it shows. Standard walk and punch gameplay, few moves and awful sound, *Last Battle* is the standard reply to 'What's the worst game you've played?'

MAZIN SAGA

SEGA ● £39.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **67%**

In a post-apocalypse world, command the Mazinger-Z armour in *Golden Axe*-style levels, switching to *Street Fighter II* one-on-one at the end of each. Graphics are amazing: the massive dinosaur foot and skeleton are huge and the *SF*-like sections are superbly animated. Gameplay lacks 'oomph'.

PIT FIGHTER

DOMARK/TENGEN ● £49.99 ● Tel 081 780 2222 **79%**

Become Buzz, Kato or Ty and fight down and dirty with ten fighters. Digitised graphics and sound add realism as you pound the controls, learn moves and grab handy objects. Pricey and crude but still exciting.

POWER ATHLETE

KANEKO ● £39.99 ● Tel 0101 708 808 1370 **57%**

A *Street Fighter II* wannabe. In one-player mode, you're stuck as Joe, and there are few moves. It's too easy but there are plenty of options and graphics are crisp and smooth.

SPLATTERHOUSE 2

SEGA ● £39.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **41%**

Transform into a steroid-poppin' psycho to rescue your girlfriend. A variety of horrific beasts attack; retaliate with fists, feet, and later staffs, bones and chainsaws. Unfortunately, gore is all this has to offer.

buyers' guide



STREETS OF RAGE II

SEGA ● £44.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **93%**

The best Sega beat-'em-up got better — and meaner. The four heroes — Axel, Blaze, Skate and Max — have many moves and several objects to maim the mobsters who stand between them and Mr X. A massive 16 Meg memory allowed the programmers to use big, fast sprites, parallax scrolling, brilliant music and sampled effects. An epic bone-crusher.

TMNT: THE HYPERSTONE HEIST

KONAMI ● £39.99 ● Tel 081 429 2446 **81%**

Konami's first MD game is nothing amazing (it *is* only the Ninja Turtles, after all) but the cartoon graphics, manic sounds, sense of humour and frantic action are enough to keep anyone happy — unless they select *Easy* mode.

WWF WRESTLEMANIA

ACCLAIM ● £39.99 ● Tel 0962 877788 **75%**

Grappling fans are well catered for, with one-on-one, tag team, tournament and Survivor Series matches and eight WWF wrestlers, including the highly predictable Hulk Hogan and remarkably jocular Undertaker. Slick presentation, big sprites and many moves put Wrestlemania in your hands.

Flight Sims

Get away from it all. Fly into the blue and above the clouds, relax... before pumping several dozen rounds into an unsuspecting enemy fighter! Not much choice, yet.

F22 INTERCEPTOR

ELECTRONIC ARTS ● £39.95 ● Tel 0753 549442 **80%**

F22 takes the complication out of flying — you automatically refuel and don't take off/land, unless you choose otherwise. What's left is fast action and lots of it. Slick 3D and good FX put you in the picture.

LHX ATTACK CHOPPER

ELECTRONIC ARTS ● £39.99 ● Tel 0753 549442 **91%**

An Apache also at your disposal, missions involve many vehicles, weather conditions and strike times. Impressive external views and rockets/explosions. Tests your nerve and noddle.

MIG-29

DOMARK ● £39.99 ● Tel 081 780 2222 **84%**

Take a MiG on five varied combat missions around the Middle East. The polygon graphics are detailed and fairly fast, the soundtrack's great and pull-down menus easily used. Realism and depth for your money.

STEEL TALONS

TENGEN ● £39.99 ● Tel 081 780 2222 **62%**

Pilot an Apache attack helicopter on 12 missions in an attempt to earn Steel Talons membership. Good vector graphics but perspective and occasional sluggishness puts you off. Uneventful; missions are easy to give up on.

Platform

Conquer villains and strange lands in leaps and bounds. A range of styles is represented here, from the strategy of *Humans* to *Captain America*'s heroics and aquatic antics of *The Little Mermaid*.

BONANZA BROS

SEGA ● £19.99 ● Tel 071 373 2222 **78%**

As Robo and/or Mobo, break into buildings, collect swag and shoot or stun guards. This wacky coin-op conversion features unusual Lego graphics and neat cooperative gameplay. Original, fast-paced fun.

CAPTAIN AMERICA

DATA EAST ● £39.99 ● Tel 0101 408 286 7080 **80%**

Choose from four of Marvel Comics' Avengers — Iron Man, The Vision, Hawkeye and Cap — then use fists and weapons to tackle the Red Skull's thugs and super-accomplices. A suitably bright, cartoon-like, energetic game, it has loads of wacky speech. Lastability is dubious but the two-player mode restores the balance.

CHAKAN

SEGA ● £39.99 ● TEL 071 371 3000 **62%**

Doomed to eternal life until he rids Earth of supernatural evil, use Chakan's twin swords to do just that. Controls are awkward, levels play and feel the same. Moody graphics, lukewarm gameplay.

CHIKI CHIKI BOYS

CAPCOM ● £49.99 ● TEL 0101 4087 270 4000 **83%**

Sword-swiping Chiki Boy becomes Flying and Sea Chiki in certain sections of this typically Japanese, cute and colourful romp. Varied graphics, plenty of hidden extras and tough levels, but the import price almost kills it.

CHUCK ROCK

VIRGIN ● £39.99 ● Tel 081 960 2255 **88%**

Chuck's main weapon against five levels of dinosaurs is his belly-butt. He uses rocks as stepping stones and to kill baddies. Cheerful graphics, vertical and leftward sections and puzzle elements make this highly playable.

COOL SPOT

VIRGIN GAMES ● £39.99 ● Tel 081 960 2255 **86%**

The red dot from 7-Up cans has to rescue spotty chums. Fizz-blasts dispatch crabs, mice, frogs and birds, small spots give essential coolness. Very slick but too similar to the superior *Global Gladiators*.

DECAPATTACK

SEGA ● £39.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **80%**

Become a Mummy and use its heads to free an island! One head extends from the stomach, the other's found under a rock then thrown, boomerang fashion. Power-ups aid the quest against equally strange adversaries. The idea and graphics are great but it's too easy.

EX-MUTANTS

SEGA ● £34.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **85%**

As Ex-Mutant Ackroyd or Shannon, hack into mutants and rescue your mates from a slimy mutant boss. Comic-book graphics and cool sampled sounds complement easy-to-get-into, hard-to-master gameplay.

THE FLINTSTONES

SEGA ● £39.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **87%**

Fred's family and friends have lost various items and it's down to him to recover them. He clubs dinosaurs and clings to ledges, later travelling by car and train. Levels show imagination and humour. Great cartoon graphics and engaging action.

GALAHAD

ELECTRONIC ARTS ● £39.99 ● Tel 0753 549442 **77%**

Galahad's a vulnerable chap — *anyone* would be, set against these tough monsters. There's a neat selection of swords and armour but not enough continues. Gameplay grows on you, perhaps not quick enough.

GLOBAL GLADIATORS

VIRGIN ● £39.99 ● Tel 081 960 2255 **93%**

Mick and Mack love The Global Gladiators, a pair of right-on comic heroes. While sitting in a burger bar, Ronald McDonald uses his magic to transform them into said Gladiators. Detailed foregrounds, neat graphical effects, slick presentation, wacky sprites and sounds. The eco-friendly gameplay's just as good. One of the most addictive platformers there is.

HOME ALONE

SEGA ● £39.99 ● Tel 071 371 3000 **62%**

As loveable home-alone Kevin (well, would *you* take Macaulay Culkin on holiday with you?! Thought not), sledge around outdoors, invent weapons from household objects and set burglar traps. Good options and sound but gameplay's very repetitive. Original but flawed.

HUMANS

IMAGITEC ● £39.99 ● Tel 010 305 935 3995 **83%**

Using different implements and types of caveman, traverse from platform to platform till the end of the level where a new invention awaits. Sounds simple but *Humans* is a unique brain-bending platform game.

INDIANA JONES AND THE LAST CRUSADE

US GOLD ● £39.99 ● Tel 021 625 3366 **83%**

As punching, whipping, leaping Indy, work your way through five levels to retrieve the Holy Grail. You start in caves, looking for a cross (remember it from the Indy-as-a-boy scout section of the movie?), then run across the top of a train (ditto) and move on. Platform puzzles, blandly-coloured but well defined sprites, crisp FX and a sizeable challenge.

JAMES BOND: THE DUEL

DOMARK ● £39.99 ● Tel 081 780 2222 **80%**

One of 007's worst enemies has kidnapped Prof Jones. First on a tanker, Bond finds hostages and bomb parts then tackles Jaws. Crisp graphics, nice sounds, realistic animation and four tough levels make Bond's mission a success.

JAMES POND II

ELECTRONIC ARTS ● £39.99 ● Tel 0753 549442 **86%**

As the cyborg Pond, negotiate countless screens in a bid to save Christmas. Pond squashes himself into a ball to kill enemies and stretches his mid-section to reach high platforms. Superlative graphics, sound and gameplay.

JEWEL MASTER

SEGA ● £34.99 ● Tel 071 373 2222 **74%**

To free Mythgard from Jardine the Mad, use magic rings separately or combined for offence and defence. Backgrounds, sprites and sounds are all dull. Dumb assailants and samey gameplay. A wasted concept.

KID CHAMELEON

SEGA ● £39.99 ● Tel 071 373 2222 **82%**

Sucked into a video game, Kid headbutts blocks and jumps on monsters. A variety of masks give different identities and extra powers. Kid's sprites give flavour till gameplay builds up and takes the lead. Enough to keep you busy.

LITTLE MERMAID

SEGA ● £34.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **78%**

Play music to scare away sea creatures as you search for merpeople. When things get tough, call a fishy friend for help! Great graphics and soothing music set the Disney atmosphere. Best for younger players.

QUACKSHOT

SEGA ● £39.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **91%**

Donald's on a globe-trotting treasure hunt and hops along platforms, 'plungering' enemies before plundering the goodies. Superb sprites and animation; this near-classic has enough depth for all the family.

RISKY WOODS

ELECTRONIC ARTS ● £39.99 ● Tel 0753 549442 **74%**

As robed Rohan, rescue monks, negotiate platforms and gather weapons. Terrific graphics but temperamental controls and a tiring onslaught of enemies is irritating. 'Kill or cure' pick-ups don't help.

ROLO TO THE RESCUE

ELECTRONIC ARTS ● £39.99 ● Tel 0753 549 442 **93%**

The elephant jumps on enemies and collects keys to free beavers, squirrels, moles and rabbits from McSmiley the Circus Master. Freed animals follow Rolo then use their distinctive talents individually. Cute, colourful graphics and deep, addictive platform action. A legend in its own buntime.

SONIC 2

SEGA ● £39.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **95%**

A two-tailed fox helps Sonic speed around levels, collect rings and stop Robotnik. Play as Tails or in a two-player split-screen race. The bonus sections involve running down a twisting 3D tube; technically impressive and a lot of fun. Back-grounds are bright and smooth-scrolling, sprites are full of character.

STRIDER II

US GOLD ● £39.99 ● TEL 021 625 3366 **83%**

With a laser sword and spider-like abilities, acrobatic Strider takes on impressive robotic adversaries on the way to the evil Master's lair. Great speech, tough levels but versatile controls.

TALESPIN

SEGA ● £34.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **68%**

Baloo and little bear pal Kit are really crate! They've gotta find ten on each level and fire balls at baddies. An air battle breaks up simplistic yet frustratingly difficult gameplay. Pleasant graphics don't save it.

TAZ-MANIA

SEGA ● £39.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **89%**

Taz is an egg lover and hears a rumour of a valley where a species of legendary birds still live. Their yummy eggs in mind, Taz jumps, spins, growls and eats his way through levels. Authentic Warner Bros cartoon graphics with sounds to match really make this game. Although it's a touch easy, its originality and character make it a classic.

TINY TOON ADVENTURES

KONAMI ● £39.99 ● Tel 081 429 2446 **91%**

Buster Bunny and his wacky companions star in an ultra-slick mixture of *Sonic* and *Super Mario World*. It's as fast as it is addictive; you're hooked as soon as you start. One of the best.

TOKI

SEGA ● £19.99 ● Tel 071 373 2222 **73%**

Toki the Ape spits fireballs at enemies as he searches for his girl and a spell to restore his humanity. Happy music and good sprites spur things along, but although it's easy to get into, it gets repetitive.

WONDERDOG (CD)

CORE DESIGN ● £44.99 ● Tel 0332 297797 **89%**

WonderDog races through seven levels, throwing stars at odd animals. Wings, happy pills and bones are collected and secret levels found. Superb sprites and animation, smooth eight-way scrolling and hum-along CD sounds.

WORLD OF ILLUSION

SEGA ● £39.99 ● Tel 071 371 3000 **91%**

Mickey Mouse and Donald Duck use magic sheets to blow away assailants. Teamwork and special features help them. Superb sprites and animation, loads of tunes and addictive play are only tainted by relatively low lastability.

Puzzle Games

Pure thought and deductive reasoning (almost) replace fancy graphics — with the exception of Sherlock's digitised video and Krusty's winning cartoon sprites!

CLUE

SCULPTURED SOFTWARE ● £39.99 ● Tel N/A **54%**

'It was Professor Plum, with the candlestick, in the study.' Amusing graphic interludes and a variety of remarkably fitting tunes but you can't beat the real board game.

GREAT WALDO SEARCH

THQ ● £39.99 ● Tel 0101 818 591 1615 **25%**

Magnifying glass icon at the ready, search for scrolls and bonuses then the bespectacled drip in the scarf — Waldo. Even bearing in mind its for children, *Waldo*'s horribly simple.

JEOPARDY

GAMETEK ● £39.99 ● Tel 0101 305 935 3995 **40%**

Well presented but questions soon repeat and have an American bias. Answers have to be entered letter by letter and spelling errors aren't excused; computer players aren't afflicted. Jolly music, though.

KRUSTY'S SUPER FUN HOUSE

FLYING EDGE ● £39.99 ● Tel 0962 877788 **93%**

Position blocks, tube sections, fans and springs to direct dumb rats, while using custard pies to kill patrolling enemies. Mind-scrambling puzzles, madcap platform action and hidden rooms to find.

LEMMINGS

SEGA/SUNSOFT ● £39.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **81%**

Use limited numbers of digging, tunneling, bridge-building, climbing and floating lemmings to overcome obstacles. Loads of levels and tough yet incredibly addictive gameplay make *Lemmings* unmissable.

SHERLOCK HOLMES (CD)

ICOM/SLEUTH ● £44.99 ● Tel N/A **86%**

Consult suspects and colleagues, travelling around Olde London as you do so, and reconstruct one of three crimes from the facts you glean. FMV and CD sound lend credibility and humour.

WHEEL OF FORTUNE

GAMETEK ● £39.99 ● Tel 0101 305 935 3995 **62%**

A tiled wall hides a (supposedly) familiar phrase. Spin the wheel to set a cash value and pick a letter. If it's in the phrase, the letter's revealed. Guess till your wrong or solve the puzzle. Dull sound, dull graphics, dull gameplay...

Racers

Hands on the steering, pedal to the metal. Jostle for position and lean into those corners. Swear when computer cars cut you up and steal the lead…

SUPER MONACO GRAND PRIX 2

SEGA ● £34.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **88%**

The original was great, this is better. In addition to 16 'real' tracks, Senna designed two special tracks and had snippets of his speech digitised. Speed and scrolling are top notch and the car handles well.

CHAMPIONSHIP PRO-AM

T RADEWEST ● £39.99 ● Tel 0101 903 874 2683 **70%**

An angled aerial view scrolls to track remote control-style trucks. Steering's relative to the car so controls are confusing. Fun when mastered but tracks are samey.

FERRARI GRAND PRIX

FLYING EDGE ● £39.99 ● Tel 0962 877788 **61%**

Five control systems, five custom cars, choice of weather, two-player split-screen game, realistic race series… This has plenty of features but the game itself is plain and too unforgiving.

HARD DRIVIN'

TENGEN ● £34.99 ● Tel 081 780 2222 **68%**

Fast 3D graphics portray the wild tracks, cars and trucks in this accurate coin-op conversion. It's a race against time and the Phantom Photon but a mere two tracks mean it doesn't match up to today's standards.

JAGUAR XJ220 (CD)

CORE DESIGN ● £39.99 ● Tel N/A **65%**

A split-screen display accomodates two players, if desired, and a track editor allows the position of your own curves, dips and obstacles. The soundtrack's brilliant but perspective's questionable — as is playability.

LOTUS TURBO CHALLENGE

ELECTRONIC ARTS ● £39.99 ● Tel 0753 549442 **81%**

A split-screen display from the traditional racing viewpoint where a selection of tracks and weather conditions await. The two-player game's simply brilliant and provides many laughs, so if you want a head-to-head racer…

MICRO MACHINES

CODEMASTERS ● £39.99 ● Tel 0926 814132 **90%**

Steer miniaturised vehicles around odd courses such as a breakfast table, bath and garden path, viewed from above. Colourful graphics, smooth scrolling and superb controls make *MM* one of the most playable racers.

OUTRUN

SEGA ● £19.99 ● Tel 071 373 2222 **55%**

Long in the tooth and lack lustre nowadays. Choose your path across the States and put your foot down, taking in the colourful backgrounds, excellent music and speech. Limited courses and shallow gameplay are its downfall.

OUTRUN 2019

SEGA ● £37.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **51%**

It runs at fine speed but roads twist unconvincingly and roadside obstacles jerk into view. The futuristic setting offers nothing new and tracks follow predictable patterns. The yawns soon follow.

ROAD BLASTERS FX (CD)

WOLFTEAM ● £39.99 ● Tel N/A **81%**

You're out for revenge! Sometimes staggeringly-fast cartoon animation is used for both through-the-windscreen and cutaway action. Wild stunts to make you gasp and versatile controls, for this type of CD game.

ROAD RASH II

ELECTRONIC ARTS ● £39.99 ● Tel 0753 549442 **86%**

If you were born to be wild, head out on the highway astride a high-tech cycle, clubs and chains at the ready. Good 3D and sense of movement, a lot of fun and a big challenge. Don't buy if you have the original.

SUPER HANG-ON

SEGA ● £19.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **79%**

The age-old aim: reach checkpoints in time. The road scrolls quickly and smoothly and the illusion of movement's convincing. The only fault is the bike's a little sluggish to handle, but at this price who's complaining?

SUPER OFF-ROAD

BALLISTIC ● £29.99 ● Tel 081 877 0880 **68%**

Drive small but perfectly formed 4x4 trucks around rugged single-screen courses. Computer opposition is too tough and although you can update five vehicle attributes, it doesn't help

TEST DRIVE II: THE DUEL

BALLISTIC ● £39.99 ● Tel 081 877 0880 **65%**

A Ferrari, Porsche and Lamborghini are at your disposal in a race against the computer to Rusti's Garage. The cars handle well but the scenery's so dull you may as well be stationary.

RPGs

A land to free, a magical item to find, a galaxy to liberate! In-depth adventures all have their rewards — and Virgin's high-tech *Corporation* gets 91%!

ADVENTURES OF WILLY BEAMISH

DYNAMIX (CD) ● £39.99 ● Tel 0734 303322 **58%**

As American schoolboy Willy, escape detention then get into surreal scrapes with your sister and dead grandfather. Cartoon graphics, fully characterised speech but horrific loading times cripple amusing gameplay.

BUCK ROGERS

ELECTRONIC ARTS ● £49.99 ● Tel 0753 549442 **82%**

Various space-faring alliances face one another as Buck selects a crew of various skills. Plenty of gameplay and detail for RPG fans but more could've been made of the scenario.

CADASH

TAITO ● £32.99 ● Tel 0101 708 520 9280 **60%**

Become a fighter or mage and go a-roving! Pretty slowly, mind you, and you'll be hard-pushed to find the roleplaying elements. You're left with a weak platform game with nicely drawn but poorly animated graphics.

CORPORATION

VIRGIN ● £39.99 ● Tel 081 960 2255 **91%**

It's you versus robots and mutants. Superlative 3D rooms and corridors and a host of gadgets firmly set the atmosphere. Defence systems are shut down with a mixture of firepower and logic. A massive challenge.

HOLLOW WORLD

SEGA ● £59.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **67%**

Scour the newly-formed Hollow World for threats. Villagers are nattered to, armour and weapons upgraded and special objects discovered. Nice graphics but no atmosphere and little to keep the experienced adventurer busy.



RINGS OF POWER

ELECTRONIC ARTS ● £49.99 ● Tel 0753 549442 **85%**

Travel on foot and by Dino, Landbeast and boats to find the Rod Of Creation. Slick programming and great isometric graphics are the first attraction, in-depth tasks and a massive challenge follow.

SHINING IN THE DARKNESS

SEGA ● £34.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **89%**

The duff storyline is forgotten when the superbly designed and coloured graphics flash onscreen. Magic and different fightings tactics defeat monsters, lateral thinking's needed at other times. One of the best Sega RPGs.

SUPER HYDLIDE

SEGA ● £19.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **47%**

Small ugly graphics are a bad sign. You die frequently for no apparent reason, then run out of time and patience. RPG aficionados will find enough to stay occupied but there are better on the market.

Shoot-'em-up

Whether aboard a helicopter, space ship or plane, or running along as a soldier, robot, wizard or cop, blasters have as many victims as they do fans.

AFTERBURNER III (CD)

CRI/SEGA ● £39.99 ●Tel 071 373 3000 **63%**

A CD sequel to the coin-ops. Jet fighter sprites look good and move realistically but ground graphics are crude and dull. There's great music and effects but not enough to do. Spend your loose change on the real thing.

ALIEN 3

ACCLAIM ● £39.99 ● Tel 0962 877788 **92%**

Part exploration, part shoot-'em-up, slaphead Ripley's got her work cut out for her. Aliens are on the prison planet she's crash-landed on and have taken several prisoners, er, prisoner. Ripley has to rescue them before chest-bursters make it a moot point but Aliens are everywhere. Grisly graphics and superlative sounds set the scene for a heart-stopping battle. Be quick on the trigger but keep an eye on your ammo.

ATOMIC RUNNER

DATA EAST ● £39.99 ● Tel 0101 408 286 7080 **66%**

Detailed, original backgrounds mix ancient artefacts with technology. But great graphics do not a game make: it's unimaginative, controls are very awkward and 15 continues put paid to lastability.

BIO-HAZARD BATTLE

SEGA ● £39.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **82%**

Aside from its toughness, it's the unusual creepy-crawly enemies (hence the 'bio') which set this aside from the average blaster. Sprites are superior, backgrounds a touch bland, but it's playable.

DEATH DUEL

RAZORSOFT ● £39.99 ●TEL 0101 405 843 3505 **30%**

Great pics between levels but graphics are otherwise childish in this cursor-controlled shooter. Duff FX, restrictive controls and boring gameplay. Taking potshots at cowardly monsters ain't fun…

DESERT STRIKE

ELECTRONIC ARTS ● £39.99 ● Tel 0753 549442 **92%**

Pilot an Apache 'copter on five taxing missions, taking on (and out) anti-aircraft units and SAM sites. Scouring the landscape for extra ammo, armour and fuel is as important as the shooting and leads to numous worrying moments. The missions are well put together; superb sprites, responsive controls and realistic effects bring them to life. A classic blast.

EMPIRE OF STEEL

FLYING EDGE ● £39.99 ● Tel 0962 877788 **72%**

You're set against Motorhead — blast seven shades of **** out of Lemmy! Om, sorry, you set against the Motorhead *Empire*. Well shaded parallax backgrounds, oodles of weapons, pumping tunes, great effects and speech, compact sprites… A pity it's so easy!

FINAL ZONE

RENOVATION ● £39.99 ● Tel 0101 408 982 2700 **73%**

As Howie Bowie (sic), climb into a powersuit and stomp through seven war zones. Controls are a pain and plenty of wandering and repetition is required. Dull backdrops, good sprites but there's often slowdown. Missed potential.

FIRE SHARK

SEGA ● £19.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **62%**

Strange: you fly a bi-plane yet can acquire three-way fire, Wide Shot and Super Shot — a four-way laser! Scrolling's smooth but backgrounds are similar, sounds are irritating and it's too easy and unexciting.

GALAXY FORCE 2

SEGA ● £19.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **42%**

Once, it was an impressive, expensive coin-op, with flashy hydraulics and 3D. Now it's a cheap and pretty nasty cart. The ship handles badly, there's sprite flicker and an irritating voice babbles at you during tunnel sections. Too easy.

GLEY LANCER

NCS ● £39.99 ● Tel N/A **79%**

On paper it's a standard scrolling shooter — power-ups, end-of-level craft etc — the only difference being a selectable permanent add-on. Good use of colour, infinite continues and a *hard* Hard setting. A good, slick blast.

G-LOC

SEGA ● £39.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **75%**

Don't expect anything as flash as the coin-op, but as a straight-laced shoot-'em-up, *G-LOC*'s entertaining. A fast, smooth blast with sampled voices, realistic effects and presentation pics.

GYNOUG

SEGA ● £19.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **81%**

A graphic treat: smooth, parallax-scrolling backgrounds, dazzling ripple effects, big, well animated enemies and no slowdown. The sounds aren't bad and the six levels will keep you playing.

HELLFIRE

SEGA ● £34.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **92%**

A galaxy-saving mission, various power-ups and end-of-level motherships. So far, so predictable. But the ship has unique directable firepower, which adds strategy, and gameplay's very tough, in an unputdownable way.

JUNGLE STRIKE

ELECTRONIC ARTS ● £39.99 ● Tel 0753 549442 **94%**

The sequel to *Desert Strike* is a 16 Meg monster! Rather than just an Apache, this time you pilot a Comanche helicopter, combat hovercraft, Stealth fighter and Special Forces motorbike to stop a madman. Campaigns take place not only in jungles but in Washington and deserts (deja vu!). The graphics and sound are staggeringly realistic and the missions are all challenging and fun. Superb stuff.

MERCS

SEGA ● £19.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **83%**

Jog along vertically-scrolling levels, *Ikari Warriors*-style, and let fly with various collectable firearms. Seven brightly-coloured levels provide an unoriginal but playable challenge.

MUSHA

SEISMIC ● £39.99 ● Tel N/A **70%**

Unusual frog-like robot armour flies up few but lengthy levels; by the time you're used to them, you run out of game! Great visuals — big, colourful, smooth scrolling — but too easy and unoriginal.

PREDATOR 2

ARENA/ACCLAIM ● £39.99 ● Tel 0962 877788 **63%**

A Predator's on the loose but Harrigan's on his tail. He blasts drug dealers and finds hostages on isometric 3D levels before the alien makes things difficult. Small sprites and bland backdrops, unoriginal and unexciting gameplay.

SEWER SHARK (CD)

SONY ● £44.99 ● Tel 0101 310 858 3777 **84%**

Fly along FMV sewer tunnels, blast Radigators, bats and assorted mutated creatures while keeping an ear open for directions. It's great to look at and the digitised actors perform well, but lastability isn't good.

SMASH TV

ACCLAIM ● £34.99 ● Tel 0962 877788 **72%**

Explore the single screen rooms of a futuristic gameshow. One of the novelties is the ability to fire in one direction while running in another, vital for survival. A flawed conversion.

SPACE HARRIER II

SEGA ● £19.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **55%**

The original began the trend for hydraulic chairs and cabinets in the arcades. Blastin' nasties and dodging obstacles has limited appeal as their patterns are soon learnt, but at this price it's okay as a piece of nostalgia.

SUNSET RIDERS

KONAMI ● £39.99 ● Tel 081 429 2446 **84%**

Back in the Wild West, one or two bounty hunters pump mean cowboys full of lead, collecting ammo and cash along the way. Its lighthearted graphics and gameplay are appealing.

SUPER FANTASY ZONE

SEGA ● £39.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 — **90%**

Cute, bold and *very* colourful graphics hit you between the eyes! Spare parts and weapons shops are very necessary to survive this fast, tough shoot-'em-up. Addictive, take-no-prisoners blasting at its best.



SUPER THUNDER BLADE

SEGA ● £19.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 — **36%**

In its day, the coin-op's graphics wowed gamers, but the same was never true of the MD's. Slow, jerky movement detracts rather than adds to the weak gameplay.

THE TERMINATOR

VIRGIN ● £39.99 ● Tel 081 960 2255 — **79%**

First in 2029 then back in 1984, Kyle Reese defends Sarah Connor from a Terminator. There are plenty of ladders and stairs to negotiate and even more foes to blast. *Terminator* fans will love it, others should try it first.

TERMINATOR 2

ACCLAIM ● £39.99 ● Tel 0962 877788 — **92%**

Direct gunsights and blow Terminators to scrap metal, but remember to collect ammo and gun coolant. This *Op Wolf* update is the best of its kind. Superb graphics, raucous sound and non-stop action. Even better with the Menacer.



THUNDER FORCE IV

TECNO SOFT ● £39.99 ● Tel N/A — **88%**

Following three respectable shoot-'em-ups, it's no surprise this is one of the best blasters around. Other than some slowdown, there's nothing to fault but plenty to enjoy. Stunning graphics, high quality sounds and addictive gameplay.

THUNDERSTORM FX (CD)

WOLFTEAM ● £39.99 ● Tel N/A — **72%**

A cartoon view from an attack chopper is overlayed with a gunsight, used to blast terrorists. *Thunderstorm FX/Cobra Command* is already looking crude compared to new releases.

TWIN COBRA

SEGA ● £34.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 — **52%**

It uses the changing icon method of power-ups — the weapon you get depends upon its colour when collected. Average graphics and sound but plenty of levels to keep you busy, if you can stay interested.

TWINKLE TALE

WAS ● £39.99 ● Tel N/A — **91%**

Viewed from above and just behind the hero, there's an arcade adventure feel to the varied level designs and a numb feeling in your fingers after you tackle end-level guardians! For both beginners and experienced gamers.

UNIVERSAL SOLDIER

ACCOLADE ● £39.99 ● Tel 081 877 0880 — **63%**

Armed with an automatic gun, laser whip, power lines and gyroscope mode, find yet more weapons as you destroy waves of dull mechanical opponents. An above-average platform blaster based very closely on *Turrican* but a disappointing licence.

ZERO WING

SEGA ● £19.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 — **74%**

Up against Cat's forces (no, not from *Red Dwarf*), you can use a tractor beam to grab enemies and launch them at others! Good use of colour, cool explosions and weapon effects, but gameplay's run-of-the-mill.

Sports

Balls of all sizes, shapes and textures feature in these games, the hockey, boxing and multi-event cart breaking the pattern.

THE AQUATIC GAMES

ELECTRONIC ARTS ● £39.99 ● Tel 0753 549442 — **77%**

James Pond and his 'Aquabat' chums compete in running, jumping, seal-minding, shell-flipping and kipper-feeding events. Graphics are gorgeous, sounds are superb, but there's limited enjoyment, even with a few players.

ARCH RIVALS

FLYING EDGE ● £39.99 ● Tel 0962 877788 — **71%**

A conversion of a two-on-two coin-op (the second basketballer controlled by the computer), it features superb cartoon intermissions but gameplay foibles. Limited gameplay against the computer, fun with a friend.

BULLS VS LAKERS

EASN ● £39.99 ● Tel 0753 549442 — **77%**

Options up to yer eyeballs and a versatile control system ain't enough. It's a struggle to get into then is too samey to keep you interested. Some good animation and FX but odd music.

CALIFORNIA GAMES

SEGA ● £19.99 ● Tel 071 373 2222 — **74%**

Up to nine players compete or practice half-pipe skateboarding, footbag, surfing, rollerskating and BMX racing. The different control methods are soon mastered but this mixed bag of events soon loses appeal.

CAL RIPKIN JR BASEBALL

MINDSCAPE ● £34.99 ● Tel 0444 246333 — **66%**

Although there's not much of it, the crystal-clear speech is the only thing to differentiate this from the crowd: Exhibition, League and Home Run games, 18 teams, pitching variables, stick man fielders...

DAVID ROBINSON'S SUPREME COURT

ACCLAIM ● £34.99 ● Tel 0962 877788 — **57%**

Manual player selection and difficult stealing make defence a pain but beating the computer's easy. The court flips 45° at the halfway line, confusing all games. Aesthetically pleasing but the gameplay's lacking.

EURO CLUB SOCCER

VIRGIN ● £39.99 ● Tel 081 960 2255 — **78%**

Control any of 170 teams, enter the five-round European Cup then aim for the ultimate: the Super Cup. The action's viewed from the stands and all three buttons are used. Once you've got the hang of it, it's playable.

EVANDER HOLYFIELD'S BOXING

SEGA ● £49.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 — **79%**

Customise your boxer, train him then hop in the ring and bash his opponent! Versatile yet easy-to-use controls, large boxers and realistic controls. Expensive and superceded by *Muhammad Ali* but give it a go.

FLAMING DODGEBALL KID

SEGA ● £39.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 — **76%**

Similar in appearance to volleyball, the basic idea's to hit members of the second team with the ball, timing your shots with its flashing. A worthwhile alternative sport and well represented by sizeable Japanese cartoon graphics and changing backgrounds. Give it a play.

GRANDSLAM TENNIS

TELENET ● £34.99 ● Tel N/A — **63%**

Plenty of options: design a character, practice shots, compete in exhibitions, play doubles... All buttons are used but text book plays and tactics don't work. Bland graphics are the plain vanilla icing on the stodgy cake.

HARDBALL III

ACCOLADE ● £39.99 ● Tel 081 877 0880 — **63%**

Although the rhythm's often mechanical, the running commentary adds life to this baseball sim. Piles of options but menus are used in gameplay, too. Expect more strategic elements than fast-paced sport.

JENNIFER CAPRIATI TENNIS

RENOVATION ● £39.99 ● Tel 0101 408 982 2700 — **84%**

Oodles of options, nifty FX and smooth character and ball movement get Jenny's game off to a great start. The variety of shots, tournaments and two-player option make it the best MD tennis game.

J GLANVILLE'S FOOTBRAWL

RAZORSOFT ● £39.99 ● Tel 0101 405 843 3505 — **59%**

American Football with a barbarian slant. The pitch is littered with tree stumps and rocks, the indoor arena has trap doors and *more* rocks. If you're doing badly, a bunch of ogres climb out the crowd and help you. However, it can work the other way around, too. The cartoon violence gives a few laughs but the gameplay's basic.

JOE MONTANA II

SEGA ● £34.99 ● Tel 071 373 2222 **76%**

Joe is John's rival to the American Football crown The controls aren't as good as *Madden's*, the zoom function's confusing and there's no play-offs. On the positive, graphics and sound are good, gameplay's suitably hectic.

JOE MONTANA III

SEGA ● £39.99 ● Tel 071 371 3000 **80%**

Poor old Joe! This game doesn't put a foot wrong — plenty of options, several viewpoints, great graphics and heaps of quality speech — but still plays second fiddle to *John Madden '93*. Aaaahh! You have to feel sorry for him.

JOHN MADDEN '93

EASN ● £39.99 ● Tel 0753 549442 **87%**

When EA beefed up '92's graphics, added more speech, stats, battery backup system and classic teams, they created one of the best sports sims ever. If you're even mildly interested in American Football, purchase this forthwith!.

JORDAN VS BIRD

ELECTRONIC ARTS ● £39.99 ● Tel 0753 549442 **55%**

The biggest names in basketball go head-to-head. Presentation's high but the sprites are sometimes blocky and gameplay's simply boring. One-on-one is the basis of a subgame, *not* an entire cart.

MARIO LEMIEUX HOCKEY

SEGA ● £39.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **49%**

A Mario game on Sega! But this namesake is no gaming star: players are sluggish, the control system's tricky and you spend half the time trying to find out who you are. Nice to look at, bad to listen to.

MUHAMMAD ALI BOXING

VIRGIN ● £39.99 ● Tel 081 960 2255 **87%**

The greatest heavyweight boxer lends his name to the greatest boxing game! Naturally, the aim is to become champ, although exhibition bouts can be organised. Presentation, graphics, sound and gameplay are of the highest calibre.

MUTANT LEAGUE FOOTBALL

ELECTRONIC ARTS ● £39.99 ● Tel 0753 549442 **78%**

Funny aliens and crafty demons add variety and humour to this vertically-scrolling American Football spoof. Pitches are dull but big sprites portray inevitable, enjoyable violence.

NBA ALL-STAR CHALLENGE

FLYING EDGE ● £39.99 ● Tel 0962 877788 **63%**

The basic concept's a loser: it's one-on-one. Worse, some of the sub-games (as in 'way below par') are simply shooting practice. There are clear digitised portraits and realistic animation but lastability's low.

NHLPA HOCKEY '93

EASN ● £39.99 ● Tel 0753 549442 **84%**

Fights and the Sin Bin join team and player stats; the top 50 slappers have special moves! Professional presentation, EA's usual wide array of sport options and realistic graphics and sound; a top-notch sim.

OLYMPIC GOLD

US GOLD ● £39.99 ● Tel 021 625 3366 **80%**

Hurdles, the 100 metres, pole vault, diving, swimming, archery and hammer throwing — not quite the full Olympics but their controls are easily mastered. Superb with the full complement of four players.

PGA TOUR GOLF II

ELECTRONIC ARTS ● £39.99 ● Tel 0753 549442 **73%**

Restrained visuals and an upmarket approach mix well with comprehensive options and clever features. A 'skins' game and 'draw and fade' facility help bump this onto the 18th green.

POWERBALL

NAMCO ● £39.99 ● Tel 0101 408 496 6371 **30%**

A future version of football, blandly-drawn teams from around the globe compete on a dull pitch. It's difficult to see who's got the ball but you're unlikely to have it long, anyway.

PRO QUARTERBACK

TRADE WEST ● £39.99 ● Tel 0101 903 874 2683 **52%**

This attempts to steal Madden and Montana's thunder with fancy 3D perspective — which doesn't work! The number of plays is limited and their selection is confusing. It's fast, fun to watch and the music's funky.

RBI BASEBALL 4

TENGEN ● £39.99 ● Tel 081 780 2222 **89%**

Large sprites, smooth movement and quality sound make this a treat. A spread of options, numerous teams to choose, piles of stats and easy to learn controls complete the happy picture.

SIDE POCKET

DATA EAST ● £39.99 ● Tel 010 408 286 7080 **73%**

The game's pool, Nine Ball and Pocket against another human, Trick Shot Challenge and a States-skipping solo Pocket game. The latter soon sets horribly high target scores but the two-player option's always fun.

SPEEDBALL 2

SEGA ● £39.99 ● Tel 071 373 3000 **90%**

In a smooth-scrolling metallic arena, teams battle it out for possession of a metal ball. Collect coins to improve the team. Manic gameplay and great presentation. One of the best two-player sports games.

SUPER HIGH IMPACT

ARENA ● £39.99 ● Tel 0962 877788 **79%**

Smart speech and pulse-pounding effects increase atmosphere in this crunching American Football game. It's aimed at newcomers to the sport and adds aggression with its Hit-O-Meter. Worthy of attention.

WINTER CHALLENGE

ACCOLADE ● £34.99 ● Tel 081 877 0880 **80%**

Gather up to nine friends, choose nationalities and enter luge, downhill and cross-country skiing, bobsled, speed skating, slalom, biathon and ski jumping. The events vary in quality but feature realistic animation and 3D scenery.

WORLD CLASS LEADERBOARD

US GOLD ● £39.99 ● Tel 021 625 3366 **63%**

US Gold gave up their snap-hook graph in favour of a fancy circular one for MD *Leaderboard*. Control is a hit-and-miss affair with the new device. Blocky graphics and weak sounds but there are plenty of courses and game types.

WORLD CUP ITALIA '90

SEGA ● £19.99 ● 071 373 3000 **59%**

Get England into the final! Viewed from above, about a tenth of the pitch is shown at any one time. The graphics are colourful and movment's speedy, but with only three kicks to master, it won't keep you playing for long.

So there you have it! The definitive guide to all the top software on the Meag Drive and Mega-CD. All you've got to do know is toddle off down your local software shop, find a game that tickles your fancy and look it up in this guide. You can find out what the boys at Sega Force Mega thought of it instantly! Happy shopping.

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